

WITTGENSTEIN in Cambridge

Letters and Documents 1911–1951

Edited by Brian McGuinness

Blackwell Publishing

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Brian McGuinness
Siena, June 2007

INTRODUCTION

The present volume contains correspondence and documents illustrating the part that Cambridge, his friends there and its institutions, played in the philosophical, professional, and general intellectual life of Ludwig Wittgenstein. Naturally the great events or the private concerns that conditioned those sides of his life must also be touched on – the two wars, the annexation of Austria, his position or need for a position, his health, and the like.

It differs considerably from the previous volume, *Cambridge Letters*, which I edited with the late Georg Henrik von Wright (Blackwell, 1995). That was designed to contain what survived of the correspondence between Wittgenstein and the chief of his Cambridge friends, by which was meant those who could fairly be regarded as his equals or even mentors rather than disciples – Bertrand Russell, G. E. Moore, J. M. Keynes, and later Frank Ramsey and (represented by a single but important letter) Piero Sraffa. Now the place of Sraffa in the collection has indeed been considerably enlarged, since a large number of letters from Wittgenstein to him and some memoranda written for Wittgenstein by him have come to light (or onto the market). These enable us to form rather more than a speculative idea of the conversations to which Wittgenstein ascribed much of the inspiration of his *Philosophical Investigations.* They also throw much light on the reactions of Wittgenstein to the annexation of his native Austria and the coming of the war, events which, by a concatenation of circumstances, almost constrained him to remain a philosopher.

The Sraffa material by itself would have been an invaluable completion of the earlier volume, but, with the encouragement of the Librarian of Trinity College, Cambridge (Dr David McKitterick) and my understanding publisher (I have been with Blackwell now for more than forty years) I decided to change the conception of the book by including letters that show something of Wittgenstein's relations with followers, pupils, friends, or younger colleagues. In principle I confine myself to the intellectual sphere, leaving aside more private and intimate correspondence with Cambridge friends, which indeed hardly exists in bulk and is mostly (entirely in the case of Francis Skinner) written to, not by, Wittgenstein. Even when there is a reply

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by Wittgenstein it usually throws light on the problems of the other party. Complete consistency is almost impossible and one or two admonitory letters have escaped this self-denying ordinance. A complete Wittgenstein correspondence (I am one of the editors) is available in the Past Masters series of InteLex on CD-ROM and Internet, which will be brought up to date from time to time. (As yet the notes and surrounding material are solely in German.)

The new material in this book is almost entirely from Wittgenstein's second Cambridge period, beginning in 1929, and, after an initial attempt to convert to seriousness the young scions of Bloomsbury, shows him dealing with more earnest and mature students of philosophy, and then as the thirties went on, the pupils or followers, notably Rush Rhees, Norman Malcolm, and von Wright himself, whose correspondence and friendship accompanied him to his deathbed.[1] The individual letters from Russell, Keynes and Moore are still printed in full, though I now omit notes fixing or requesting an appointment. In other cases I have here allowed myself to excerpt letters to Wittgenstein, leaving out material of ephemeral interest. His own letters are always left in their entirety.

Another major change and addition to the volume is that I have now included minutes of meetings and discussions that Wittgenstein attended or led and also documents concerning his official status from time to time. Will future generations know the joy of archives? It is touching to think of the young secretaries of the Trinity Mathematical Society writing their proceedings and Wittgenstein's words into those leather-bound volumes before going off to calculate the effect of tides off the invasion coast of France. Jacky Cox, Deputy Archivist of Cambridge University, previously Modern Archivist of King's, and Jonathan Smith, Archivist of Trinity, not only procured me access to such treasures but were kind enough to share their enthusiasm with me.

No more than previous collections of their letters is this book meant as a first introduction to Wittgenstein and his circle nor an encyclopaedia of his acquaintance. But its publication will be justified if it conveys a picture of the almost cyclical pattern of his life and work: periods devoted to interchange with others alternating with retirement to condense the ideas he drew from and wanted to contribute to that very interchange. All his development, that is all his life, is characterized by contrast and inner conflict. The evidence of his letters, as of his contemporaries, shows him in turn shy and affectionate, fierce and censorious, happy to collaborate and sure of his own judgement. Many quarrels and nearly as many reconciliations are documented. His struggles to publish the *Tractatus* can be followed, his apparent retreat from the intellectual world, his being wooed back to philosophy by Keynes and Ramsey, later and repeated plans of his to leave philosophy, all in the end reversed. He was often on the point of producing something for publication and then chased some new ideal of perfection or some new topic suggested by others in discussion or by his own

[1] Not represented in the present collection is the correspondence, I think still extant, with M. O'C. (Con) Drury, one of his closest friends for the longest time. Their friendship and exchange of ideas are described in M. O'C. Drury, *The Danger of Words and Writings on Wittgenstein* (Bristol: Thoemmes Press, 1996).

wide-ranging, almost desultory, reading. It was in these ways that he came to certainty (thanks to Moore and Malcolm) and to colours (picking up a book of Goethe's on his last visit to Vienna). In the end many shipwrecks of books in draft were left for his friends to refloat. Events as well as some attraction, despite a distrust often expressed, brought him back repeatedly to Cambridge. It was as important to him as his solitudes.

Wittgenstein first came to see Russell, then a lecturer at Cambridge, on 18 October 1911[2] and seems to have stayed until Christmas, though he was still registered as studying at the University of Manchester for that autumn. He was admitted as a member of Cambridge University and of Trinity College on 1 February 1912. His status was at first that of an undergraduate. At the beginning of June the Degree Committee of the Special Board for Moral Science admitted him as an Advanced Student to a Course of Research and "asked Mr. Bertrand Russell to be kind enough to act as the Director and Supervisor of the Student".[3] Wittgenstein attended lectures by G. E. Moore, not yet Professor, and also had some supervision, which both men found frustrating, from the logician W. E. Johnson. Wittgenstein was in residence during all three terms in the year 1912 and during the Lent and Easter Terms of 1913. The greater part of the academic year 1913–14 he spent in Norway, thinking and writing on his own. In April G. E. Moore visited him there. Wittgenstein had returned to Austria for the summer and in August 1914, immediately after the outbreak of the war, he volunteered for the Austro-Hungarian Army.

Coming to Cambridge had proved one of the great changes in his life. He had to make a choice, agonizing for him, between his gifts as an aircraft engineer and those as a thinker. Russell helped him to make the choice we know of, but largely by bringing him into a group where he could make free use of his intellect. To be surrounded by Moore, Keynes, the Stracheys, and even the younger Apostles (then practically the Cambridge branch of Bloomsbury) was a new experience for him. His family background was one of wealth and high culture but not intellectual to the degree cultivated in this new environment. He brought with him, it is true, a brisk and practical knowledge of science, which made him impatient with vapourings, but it is fair to say that the intellectual discussion of everything, with a pleasure taken in the discussion as well as in the result, was (from all that we know) new to him. He came to Cambridge (like St Augustine to Carthage) and it marked him for life, which indeed he ended there. *Hinc lucem et pocula sacra* is one of that University's mottos: there he found the blend of problems and techniques that suited him. Of course he was Austrian (or, as he and Russell put it, German), and many aspects of English life irritated him, but the construct of the Austro-Hungarian intellectual sits uneasily upon him, if we consider most of his life.

By his happy choice of Russell as a teacher (and Russell's quick perception), Wittgenstein found himself within months of his arrival a member of this elite, a group who took their own social position for granted (as, I think, Wittgenstein too

[2] Letter from Russell to Lady Ottoline Morrell of that date.

[3] Letter of 5 June 1912 from J. N. Keynes (father of J. M. Keynes and University Registrar) to Dr W. M. Fletcher, Tutor at Trinity College.

always did) but were very conscious of the superiority of their ideals to those of worldly success, which, they thought, was preached at Oxford. They had their Bible in Moore's *Principia Ethica* (it is interesting that *Principia Mathematica* is named after that, and not the other way round) but now thought (according to Russell) of a life of retirement among fine shades and nice feelings. The younger ones also tended to be in love with one another. We have references to discussions with older members of the circle: Wittgenstein maintaining that mathematics would improve people's taste because taste comes of thinking honestly. They were all against him. And perhaps this was typical. At all events he attempted to resign from the Society itself (the Apostles), thinking that the younger members "had not yet made their toilets. And the process, though necessary was indecent." (He was to resume membership, as a senior member, much later.)

What were his objections to them, apart from the immaturity of the young? He was critical of Moore's *Principia*, of its style for one thing ("Unclear things don't get a bit clearer by being repeated") but also of its content: of its attempt to *describe* the nature of the good. Wittgenstein wanted nothing but honesty, nothing but to be (as Russell forced him to say) a creature of impulse. His impulses being strong but never shameful, principles and such things seemed to him nonsense. The brittle arguments of the Society, where the paradoxical or the scandalous would be defended for sheer love of argument, seemed to him intolerable. And there was another thing: all, even the older members, lacked what he called reverence: even Russell (whom, at that period, he still respected) was so philistine as to appreciate the advantages of their age as opposed to previous ones. D. H. Lawrence, who had a consciously Nietzschean attitude to the world, was to feel uncomfortable with Bloomsbury for similar reasons.

Still, between them the members of this group set him on the way to writing his first and in some ways his greatest work. He was to repair Russell's logic; he was to deal with Keynes's probability in two or three paragraphs; he was to show that ethics, Moore's field, did not consist of propositions at all. And perhaps this is what they wanted from him: they "looked to him for the next big step in philosophy", as Russell told Wittgenstein's sister; and after the war they were happy (as C. D. Broad put it) "to dance to the highly syncopated pipings of Herr Wittgenstein's flute". There were other ways too that they helped him – their very acceptance of him was a boon. And among them "He gained from Heaven, 'twas all he wished, a friend", one in their circle, though not totally of it, to whom he dedicated that same work.

The original *Abhandlung*, whose completion he announced to Russell in 1915, was the product of this Cambridge period, but the additions he made to it in 1916–18 (the passages on God, freedom, and the mystical) issued rather from the next two phases in his life. Tolstoy's religion had taken hold of him in the war and the circle of young disciples of Kraus and Loos whom he met in Olmütz acted as midwives to the utterance of what he had previously and, as he thought, necessarily left unsaid.[4] Russell was shocked by the mysticism that thus entered in, while as for religion the

[4] For the Olmütz circle see Paul Engelmann, *Letters from Ludwig Wittgenstein with a Memoir*, ed. Brian McGuinness (Oxford: Blackwell, 1967), and my *Young Ludwig* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2005), pp. 246ff.

least hint of it was enough to exile one from the drawing rooms of Bloomsbury. "We have lost Tom", was Virginia Woolf's comment on T. S. Eliot's conversion.

The book, apart from this, as he thought, extraneous element, ravished Russell. It came from the prison camp at Cassino in Italy, where Wittgenstein spent most of his captivity after the Austro-Hungarian surrender of November 1918, remaining until August 1919. He had with him a completed typescript of what Moore was to call the *Tractatus*. The intermediacy of Keynes brought it safely to England.

In December 1919, and thus not long after his release from captivity, Wittgenstein was able to meet Russell at The Hague (it was evidently necessary to go to a country which had been neutral) where the two friends had an impassioned discussion of the work (letters **65–76**). On his return to England, Russell wrote an introduction to it (of which Wittgenstein did not approve) and was in other ways instrumental in ensuring its publication both in Germany and in England (letters **88–96**). The two met again at Innsbruck in 1922 (see notes to **95**). It turned out to be a somewhat sour encounter, after which their friendship was never restored to what it had been before, though there are at first a couple of amiable letters (**96–7**).

These were the years in which Wittgenstein relinquished his whole fortune to his family and withdrew from philosophy to become a teacher in elementary schools in more or less remote villages in Lower Austria (1920–6), but this did not mean a complete break in his relations with Cambridge. Early in 1923 he wrote to Keynes seeking renewed contact (letter **98**). The letter remained unanswered for a whole year, but in the mean time (in September 1923) a young friend of Keynes's from Cambridge, the brilliant mathematician and philosopher, Frank Ramsey, who had translated the *Tractatus* for C. K. Ogden, came to see Wittgenstein at Puchberg am Schneeberg. He seems to have stayed there for at least two weeks and to have had long discussions daily with Wittgenstein, who explained the *Tractatus* to him. One result of these talks was a number of corrections made both to the German text and to the English version, most of which were incorporated in the second impression of 1933.[5] No doubt Ramsey's reports were what stirred Keynes to generous efforts to secure Wittgenstein's return to Cambridge (see letters **111**, **112**, and **115**). There is evidence that in the autumn of 1923 Wittgenstein himself was contemplating the possibility of giving up his job as a teacher and coming to Cambridge to complete his work for a degree. But a year later he declined Keynes's invitation, explaining his reasons both to Keynes himself and to Ramsey, who was once again on a visit to Austria.

In August 1925, however, Wittgenstein did visit England, stayed with Keynes and met Ramsey and other friends. Keynes helped him to pay for this trip (letters **110–11**). This came about with all the interlacing of intellectual and personal life characteristic of Bloomsbury. Keynes was newly married to the lovable but eccentric Lydia Lopokova: indeed these days were to have been their honeymoon. Ramsey was on the eve of his marriage but had to leave his bride and come down to Sussex so that Wittgenstein would have someone to talk to. Geoffrey Keynes and his wife were

[5] See C. Lewy, "A Note on the Text of the *Tractatus*", *Mind* 76 (1967), 417–23, and letters **99**, **107** and **152**.

invited to make up the party, and Virginia and Leonard Woolf came over from their house nearby. We know the sort of thing that went on from other occasions – Lydia's boutades taken literally by the Bloomsburyites; Wittgenstein discontented when, instead of his being allowed to prevail in an argument, the subject was blithely changed; Wittgenstein's long walks with Ramsey, which gave them an opportunity to quarrel about psychoanalysis. (The quarrel is attested, the subject probable.) At all events a return to Cambridge and philosophy was deferred.

Two more avatars, each worthy of a separate narration, intervened: the building of the Kundmanngasse house (in some sense a return to the preoccupations of the Olmütz circle) interspersed with the modest beginnings of discussion with selected members of the Vienna Circle.[6] But for reasons which we can easily conjecture Vienna was not a place for his work: he would only be a wealthy amateur, except that he had given away all his money; and so might seem a hanger-on in his own family. Cambridge it must be and thither he returned in the first days of 1929, the Cambridge of Frances Cornford and "the men going to lecture with the wind in their gowns". He was welcome there as much because he had been known earlier in his vulnerable youth as because he had now a name in the learned world. This old acquaintance preserved him (particularly at Trinity) from occasional censure.[7]

"God has arrived," wrote Keynes to Lydia, and indeed Wittgenstein dominated their lives at first, staying in a college guest room at King's, and then with Ramsey (their quarrel forgotten), in both cases for longer than was really decent. They parked him with Maurice Dobb, a mentor of the young and left-wing Apostles of the day, where he resumed the life of sixteen years earlier, surprising himself by the ease with which he did so. His quarrel with Moore too was effortlessly overcome – it was a period, of hope perhaps, when Wittgenstein's personal charm was not overshadowed by his demands as much on others as on himself.

Formally speaking he was readmitted to Trinity and the university on 18 January 1929: so soon was the idea that he had come only for a holiday abandoned. He kept residence during the Lent and Easter Terms, proceeding to the PhD degree on 18 June, the *Tractatus* being accepted as a thesis. Ramsey was formally his supervisor and Moore and Russell his examiners. He was in residence (now in the house of Mrs Quiggin in Grantchester Road) for the three terms of 1929–30 and the Michaelmas Term 1930. During the academic year 1929–30 he was paid a small sum in respect of

[6] For first-hand accounts see Herbert Feigl, "The Wiener Kreis in America", in *Perspectives in American History*, vol. II (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1968), p. 639, and Karl Menger, *Reminiscences of the Vienna Circle*, ed. B. McGuinness, L. Golland, and A. Sklar (Dordrecht and Boston: Kluwer, 1994), *passim*. *Wittgenstein and the Vienna Circle*, conversations recorded by F. Waismann, ed. B. F. McGuinness, trans. with J. Schulte (Oxford: Blackwell, 1978) (German edition, *Wittgenstein und der Wiener Kreis*, ed. B. McGuinness (Oxford: Blackwell, 1967)) contains a general account as well as later conversations.

[7] One distinguished classicist wrote to me, "He seemed to ignore that a Fellowship involved as well as privileges some few duties." But Littlewood, Hardy and others close to the Council ("High Trinity") were prepared to make allowances.

lectures on philosophical logic given at the invitation of the Moral Science Faculty Board. This was converted into a Faculty Lecturership in October 1930, and continued on the same basis in the following years. He was elected a Fellow of Trinity College under Title B on 5 December 1930, and at first given rooms in Bishop's Hostel. He was later to return to his old undergraduate rooms at the top of a tower in Whewell's Court.[8] After a prolongation the fellowship eventually expired at the end of the academic year 1935–6, when his Faculty Lecturership also came to an end.

Discussions with Ramsey were a joy – "They're like some energetic sport and are conducted, I think, in a good spirit. There is something erotic and chivalrous about them. They educate me into a degree of courage in thinking." He then reflects on his ability or inability to pursue "science" (*Wissenschaft*, a word he later avoided) on his own.[9] The topics of the discussions (cut short by Ramsey's illness and death within a year) can be surmised – visual space, the foundations, if any, of physics and mathematics, and the like, but they are of a technical nature. It was a rigorous return to philosophy. Not for nothing does he later mention how much he owed to Ramsey's "forcible and unerring criticism",[10] though, as we shall see, he needed something further to set him on a new path.

Another token of his remaining within the Bloomsbury connexion of his earlier Cambridge years was Wittgenstein's formal return to the Society (the Apostles) and his interest in the literary, dramatic, and musical activities of the young, above all the privileged young – "all those Wykehamists", as Leavis scornfully described them ("all those Julian Bells" was Wittgenstein's own phrase). He took Dadie Rylands round the College garden explaining how Shakespeare should be produced. He analysed the symbols in the poems of William Empson's circle. He criticized John Hare's (the later Lord Listowel's) singing and commented on the paintings of Julian Trevelyan.

Something – more than one thing probably – changed him. His views were perhaps not given the attention they deserved. Rylands smiled at the advice that was given, Julian Bell wrote a poetic epistle, addressed to Braithwaite, protesting against the cultural hegemony claimed by Wittgenstein. John Cornford's scorn for his teachers may have been in part directed against, for it was apparently resented by, Wittgenstein.[11] He did not differ from them politically, for he remained resolutely left-wing in his sympathies. He did not oppose his great friend Skinner's idea of going to the Spanish

[8] This seems to have corresponded to a romantic ideal of his: he sought lodgings in the clock tower that was the principal feature of Olmütz and in his observation post as an artillery officer he had felt like a prince in an enchanted castle.

[9] "Ich gehe in der Wissenschaft nur gern [*I believe* nur ungern *was meant*] allein spazieren" (MS 105, p. 4 (15 Feb. 1929)). On this puzzling passage and the influence of Ramsey in general see my "Wittgenstein and Ramsey", in M. C. Galavotti (ed.), *Cambridge and Vienna: Frank P. Ramsey and the Vienna Circle* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2006), pp. 19–28.

[10] Foreword to *Philosophical Investigations*, ed. G. E. M. Anscombe and R. Rhees (Oxford: Blackwell, 1953), p. ix ("dieser stets kraftvollen und sicheren Kritik").

[11] Jaakko Hintikka told me that he heard Wittgenstein (in 1949–50) emphasize how mistaken John Cornford had been in thinking that he had nothing to learn from his teachers.

Civil War: three of the four Cambridge men killed in that war were pupils of his[12] and the fourth was John Cornford, the pupil *manqué* mentioned above. Yet Wittgenstein began to find friends and disciples in less privileged and more earnest circles, who were primarily intent on personal improvement: King, Lee, and Townsend, who have published their notes on his lectures; the circle round Skinner; and particularly Drury, Smythies, and Rhees, who remained close to him till the end. Each group is worthy of description, but none is remotely to be thought of in connexion with Bloomsbury. They were prepared, however, for the difficult task of discipleship: it meant that they had to get the essential things right and yet be prepared to disagree with Wittgenstein, but above all they could not play with ideas, or indeed with much else. A particular part is played in the present volume by a number of maturer students, whose later letters describe their attempts to put into practice the lessons they had learnt from or with Wittgenstein. W. H. Watson, who shared and fed Wittgenstein's taste for the nonsense – the absurdities of would-be philosopher scientists like Jeans and Eddington – perhaps qualifies in his *On Understanding Physics* as one of the best spokesmen Wittgenstein could have had. Later Alister Watson, perhaps the only one of the charmed circle of young Apostles to remain with him, contributed in somewhat the same way presentations of Wittgensteinian ideas on the foundations (or lack of foundations) of mathematics.

In obedience to a social law that I have observed in operation at Oxford (no doubt it is a particular form of a universal tendency) a special group of his friends, with whom he felt most at home, were, like himself, foreigners, who (more than was necessary but not more than was natural) failed to fit easily into the cosy world of the colleges. Piccoli, the Professor of Italian, was one example; Bachtin (Nicholas, brother of Mikhail), a linguist, a poet, and a serial exile, was, slightly later, another. But the chief figure of this kind was undoubtedly Piero Sraffa, a protégé (soon to become an equal) whom Keynes had brought from Mussolini's Italy. Wittgenstein was confronted with willpower equal to his own. Sraffa had already published a groundbreaking article, comparable in some ways to Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* and was now addressing, according to Amartya Sen, "foundational economic issues of general social and political interest (some of which have been discussed for over two hundred years)".[13] Sen adds that it would be surprising if Sraffa had not had a philosophical position of his own, and one that went beyond "the rather limited boundaries of positivist or representational reasoning commonly invoked in contemporary mainstream economics". What this position was (it was of course not avowed as a philosophical one) can be

[12] Julian Bell himself, David Guest (both of whom had Marxist objections to Wittgenstein's teaching) and Ivor Hickman, whose few letters to Wittgenstein show a healthy independence alongside esteem and affection. In an obituary notice (*Christ's College Magazine*, 1939) C. P. Snow, then a Fellow, describes him as "exuberantly fond of abstract thought" on the meaning of meaning and the like. Probably his death was the occasion of a disagreement with Drury over the nature of a "future life" (R. Rhees, *Recollections of Wittgenstein* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), p. 132).

[13] Amartya Sen, "Sraffa, Wittgenstein, and Gramsci", *Journal of Economic Literature* 41 (2003), 1240–55.

seen or sensed in the interchanges adumbrated (in some cases spelt out) in the present collection.[14]

And there were many such discussions: the two met, usually weekly, and had almost an agenda, not so much topics to be covered but errors of thinking about the most ordinary matters (political events or whatever suggested itself), to be identified for future avoidance not just popular misconceptions, *pseudodoxia epidemica* so to speak, but errors that they found in their own thinking. Sometimes there was direct discussion of Wittgenstein's philosophy. The anecdote of the Neapolitan gesture has become famous – "What is the grammar of that?" asked Sraffa. Looking back, when he was making a determined effort to write the definitive account of his changed view,[15] Wittgenstein sees this question of Sraffa's as one of two axe strokes against his previous doctrine of the crystal character of logic.[16] Sraffa had shown him that he had to accept as a sign something for which he could not give the rules and grammar.

He associates this immediately with the realization that there was no essence of language, no realm of meaning to be tapped into. We should abandon the pneumatic theory of thought,[17] the idea that behind our understanding and meaning there was some structure (something concrete, a word actually used by Wittgenstein in this context) that we could perhaps only glimpse but on which we depended for our thoughts or utterances to have sense.[18] This substructure or skeleton now vanished. He describes the theory also as one that supposes that sense is something that we give life to, like a child, and it then has a life of its own, which we can only follow and examine. Not so with sense or understanding, for it is only our continued activity that gives life to sense or language. An epigrammatical summary of this appears already in his Brown Book (1934–5).

If Sraffa made him feel like a tree stripped of its branches, Sraffa in the end found their conversations too much – "I won't be bullied by you, Wittgenstein," Smythies (who, you might say, had been bullied by both) heard him say. Sraffa resembled Wittgenstein even in some of the methods and aims of his scientific work. He too could use their common friends Ramsey and Alister Watson to help him with the mathematics he needed, but he took strictly what he needed from them.

About this time (see letters **190–1** and notes) it seems to have been Wittgenstein's general plan, often modified by circumstances, to publish his results, if possible, and

[14] See in particular the exchange of letters and memoranda from 1934 (**169–75**).

[15] In a rough notebook (MS 157b) contemporary with 1936–7 MS 142, which is the basis of the opening part of *Philosophical Investigations.* The notebook is echoed in many of the passages about the nature of philosophy in *Ph. Inv.* §§89–133.

[16] The other was the idea of family resemblance, which he implies he got from Spengler. That too militated against the assumption of essences.

[17] Misrepresented in the English of *Ph. Inv.* §109 as "the conception of thought as a gaseous medium". *Pneuma*, with its connotation of something that gives life is certainly not gas. (Wittgenstein himself says that the word "ethereal" would be better.)

[18] In a recent article Joachim Schulte has brought out well how Wittgenstein's idea of *pneuma* is indebted to that of Spengler, whom he was reading about the time of his first conversations with Sraffa ("The Pneumatic Conception of Thought", *Grazer Philosophische Studien* 71 (2006), 39–55). In Spengler the notion is typical of the *magical* way of thinking.

to leave academic life, at any rate as far as England was concerned. In September 1935 he visited the Soviet Union with the idea of starting a new life there and in early 1938 he thought of taking up the study of medicine, perhaps in Ireland. In between, with no post, he spent the remainder of 1936 (after the expiry of his fellowship) and much of 1937 in his cabin in Norway, preparing his book for publication and meditating on what he saw as his own shortcomings. One upshot of the latter preoccupation was a series of confessions which he made to family and friends at the beginning of 1937, while the former activity did eventually lead to his offering an early version of *Philosophical Investigations* to the Cambridge University Press, though it is not clear that it was complete and he had difficulty finding a good translator. He had not always been whole-hearted about publication, since, for a period at the beginning of 1938, he appears (see letter **215**) to have contemplated placing his papers in Trinity College Library for possible publication after his death (which is more or less what did in the end happen).

The annexation of Austria in March 1938 altered Wittgenstein's preoccupations, perhaps decisively. He had to consider his own situation, whether to change his nationality and if so what new nationality to seek, and, a related problem, what to do to help his family, threatened with racial persecution. He had also to find an occupation. The letters show how he resolved these problems with the help and advice of Keynes and Sraffa. In fact he set in train an application for British naturalization, which took almost exactly a year in coming. Also he resumed his previous teaching activities, to a select group on some occasions in Lent Term 1938, more regularly, though still gratis, in the Easter Term. No position as Faculty Lecturer was now available and, though some payment was made for the academic year 1938–9, he was told that such payments could not be guaranteed beyond that period.

In early 1939 Wittgenstein applied for the Professorship of Philosophy (to be vacated by Moore in October) and was elected, again having sought the help and advice of Keynes, though in truth little assistance was needed. In October he took up the chair and was re-elected at Trinity, this time to a Professorial Fellowship. He remained in office, with leave, at first for war work then for writing, during 1943 and 1944. He resumed his professorial duties in January 1945 and continued to discharge them until the summer of 1947: Michaelmas Term of that year was a period of sabbatical leave and he formally resigned his Fellowship and Professorship at the end of the calendar year. Extracts from the University Archives which give details of all these changes are included in the present volume.

During most of his time at Cambridge (for the qualification, see letter **199**) Wittgenstein was much interested in the activities of the philosophical discussion society there, the Moral Science Club, and it is frequently referred to in the letters. He it was who first proposed, in 1912, the election of a standing Chairman to guide the discussions. This office was distinct from that of President in a way I have been unable to fathom. For a long period the Chairman was Moore, but at the end Wittgenstein largely succeeded him in this role as well as in the Chair of Philosophy. Wittgenstein followed the proceedings of the Club with almost as much intensity as he devoted to the organization of his own lectures or classes. A number of extracts from the minutes are included in the present volume as also (a recent find) minutes

of the of the Trinity Mathematical Society for the two meetings at which Wittgenstein spoke.

After resigning as Professor, Wittgenstein continued to work on philosophy in Ireland and during visits to the United States or even Vienna. He also moved between Oxford and Cambridge. The variety of his reading and interests, and the effect on his work of his illness can be followed in letters to von Wright (now his successor), Rush Rhees, and Norman Malcolm. These often overlap and so have been included selectively. The fatal nature of his illness pronounced itself in the course of 1949 and he died at Cambridge in April 1951, working to the end.

Wittgenstein usually kept letters of any importance or interest that he received. This was probably true even before the First World War, for it is hard to imagine Wittgenstein destroying Russell's letters, for example. But anything from that period is probably irremediably lost. A collection of letters he received from the period of the First World War and the early 1920s was discovered comparatively recently in the house of a dependent of the family. They were saved from destruction only by the quick perceptions of Frau Charlotte Eder of Vienna. For a later part of the 1920s, while he was still living in Austria, he made the house of his friend, Ludwig Hänsel, his centre and left a number of letters there for safe keeping. These two collections are now mostly in the Austrian National Library in Vienna and the Brenner Archive in Innsbruck. Finally, a considerable collection, now somewhat dispersed, of letters that Wittgenstein had received in Cambridge in the 1930s and 1940s was among his papers at the time of his death.

In the case of some friends and perhaps all family members he kept every letter, but in other cases only a letter or two, perhaps a particularly characteristic one as a kind of memento. This was natural in the case of Cambridge friends and colleagues, where the correspondence mostly served to make arrangements to meet, while the relationship was essentially conducted face to face. The two letters from Moore printed here are probably all of his that Wittgenstein kept, and we could include as many as nine from Keynes only because the latter often kept carbon copies of letters dispatched. Sraffa's important letter was a singleton in Wittgenstein's bundles. The other memoranda or notes from Sraffa were preserved in Sraffa's own papers, though obviously written to be read by Wittgenstein.[19]

On the other side, Russell and Keynes kept nearly all papers of any interest. The same was true of Sraffa, though as stated his collection suffered in his last years, and it cannot be safely regarded as restored to completeness. Of Moore it may fairly be said that he hoarded every scrap. Thus as well as all the letters and brief communications printed here, there is a mass of Christmas and Easter cards from Wittgenstein. It is of some interest to note that while from Vienna Wittgenstein would send chaste cards with Biedermeier views of the Josefsplatz or the like – the sort of thing his sisters would order from a Kohlmarkt stationer in boxes – his English cards were chosen especially for the banality of the illustrations and of the accompanying verses, as for example:

[19] They were not known at the time of *Cambridge Letters* (1995).

If wishes count, you'll surely have
Life's blessings rich and true
For I am wishing from my heart
Such good things all for you.

These were not the cards usually exchanged at Cambridge, but (it is legitimate to suppose) the clumsy sincerity of a different level of English life was more acceptable to him; and, as for taste, he was chiefly concerned to avoid the half and half.[20] Other correspondents' letters from Wittgenstein are in various collections, von Wright's and Malcolm's are in Trinity College Library, Rhees's in the Austrian National Library in Vienna. Wittgenstein's letters to W. H. Watson were discovered at the last moment (for this publication) in the Library of Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario. Some of the letters to Russell (also one from him) and fragments from letters to Keynes and Ramsey are in German. They are so printed but an English version is provided. I am responsible for these translations and for occasional other ones, including that of the poem referred to in letter **291**.

Wittgenstein's English of the earlier years was not always idiomatic, and his spelling, whether in English or in German, was never entirely sure. My policy as an editor has been not to interfere with grammar and idiom at all. Spelling and occasionally punctuation has been corrected when it was necessary to avoid misunderstanding, but has frequently been left in its idiosyncratic form, to give an impression of the informality of one or another letter. This applies both to Wittgenstein and to his correspondents. It is sometimes interesting that their minor lapses show their unfamiliarity with, or indifference to, the English or German name or concept involved. Wittgenstein departs from English practice more frequently when he is, or has been, away from England or is excited or is writing to Sraffa. Words, parts of words, or numbers in square brackets are editorial insertions or conjectures.

A characteristic of Wittgenstein's style is his use of underlining to give emphasis to words and phrases. Words once underlined are here printed in *italics*; words twice underlined, in SMALL CAPITALS; words thrice underlined, in NORMAL CAPITALS; and words four times underlined in NORMAL CAPITALS UNDERLINED.

Letters and documents are arranged in chronological order, or what is taken to be such, and are numbered accordingly for purposes of reference, using the style **123** in continuous text. The list of correspondents and sources of documents (with letter numbers) at the end of the book permits a particular correspondence or other relationship to be followed.

[20] T. Redpath, *Ludwig Wittgenstein: A Student's Memoir* (London: Duckworth, 1990), pp. 94–5, in the course of making a similar observation, says that Wittgenstein was avoiding "the aesthetic". In a letter to Malcolm Wittgenstein insists on "soupiness" (see **416**).

LETTERS AND DOCUMENTS

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258. To P. Sraffa, 24.7.1939
259. From G. H. von Wright, 27.8.1939
260. To P. Sraffa, 3.9.1939
261. To R. Rhees, 13.9.1939
262. To R. Townsend, 13.9.1939
263. To G. H. von Wright, 13.9.1939
264. To R. Townsend, 15.10.1939

1940

265. To P. Sraffa, [January 1940]
266. From the Minutes of the Moral Science Club, 2.2.1940
267. To J. Wisdom, [12.2.1940]
268. From the Minutes of the Trinity Mathematical Society, 19.2.1940
269. From G. H. von Wright, 22.2.1940
270. From J. H. Clapham, 28.2.1940
271. To N. Malcolm, 26.3.1940
272. To R. Rhees, 5.4.1940
273. From the Minutes of the Moral Science Club, 23.5.1940
274. To N. Malcolm, 29.5.1940
275. To R. Townsend, 31.5.1940
276. To W. H. Watson, 17.6.1940
277. To N. Malcolm, 22.6.1940
278. To W. H. Watson, 19.7.1940
279. To R. Townsend, 19.7.1940
280. To P. Sraffa, 26.7.1940
281. To R. Rhees, 14.8.1940
282. From W. H. Watson, 8.9.1940
283. To W. H. Watson 1.10.1940
284. To N. Malcolm, 3.10.1940
285. From the Minutes of the Moral Science Club, 25.10.1940
286. To R. Townsend, 13.11.1940
287. From G. H. von Wright, 9.12.1940
288. From R. Rhees, 31.12.1940

1941

289. To P. Sraffa, 8.1.1941
290. From the Minutes of the Moral Science Club, 31.1.1941
291. To G. E. Moore, 7.3.1941
292. To G. E. Moore, 17.6.1941
293. To N. Malcolm, 5.7.1941

294. To the Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge University (J. A. Venn), 14.10.1941
295. From L. Goodstein, 20.10.1941
296. To P. Sraffa, [4.11.]1941
297. From the Minutes of the Moral Science Faculty Board, 12.11.1941

1942

298. To J. T. Saunders (Assistant Registrary), 30.1.1942
299. From the Minutes of the Moral Science Faculty Board, 22.4.1942
300. To P. Sraffa, [20.5.1942]
301. To J. T. Saunders (Assistant Registrary), 24.5.1942
302. To J. T. Saunders (Assistant Registrary), 21.7.1942
303. To W. J. Sartain (First Assistant Registrary), 23.7.1942
304. To R. Rhees, 4.11.1942
305. To N. Malcolm, 24.11.1942

1943

306. To R. Rhees, 1.4.1943
307. To J. T. Saunders (Assistant Registrary), 4.5.1943
308. To N. Malcolm, 11/19.9.1943
309. To N. Malcolm, 7.12.1943

1944

310. From R. Rhees, 30.1.1944
311. To R. Rhees, 9.2.1944
312. To J. T. Saunders (Assistant Registrary), 7.3.1944
313. To J. T. Saunders (Assistant Registrary), 23.3.1944
314. To Y. Smythies, 7.4.[1944]
315. To J. T. Saunders (Assistant Registrary), 16.9.1944
316. To G. E. Moore, [October 1944]
317. To R. Rhees, 17.10.[1944]
318. From R. Rhees, 29.10.1944
319. To G. E. Moore, [November 1944]
320. To N. Malcolm, 16.11.1944
321. To R. Rhees, 28.11.1944
322. To P. Sraffa, [20.12.1944]

1945

323. To R. Rhees, 19.1.1945

324. To Miss Curtis, 18.5.1945
325. To N. Malcolm, 22.5.1945
326. From the Minutes of the Moral Science Faculty Board, 28.5.1945
327. From the Minutes of the Moral Science Club, 31.5.1945
328. To R. Rhees, 13.[6.1945]
329. To R. Rhees, 25.6.[1945]
330. To N. Malcolm, 26.6.1945
331. To G. E. Moore, [end July/beginning August 1945]
332. From G. E. Moore, 5.8.1945
333. To G. E. Moore, [7.8.1945]
334. To N. Malcolm, 17.8.1945
335. To N. Malcolm, [20.8.1945]
336. To N. Malcolm, 8.9.1945
337. To N. Malcolm, 20.9.1945
338. To N. Malcolm, 6.10.1945
339. From the Minutes of the Moral Science Club, 25.10.1945
340. To N. Malcolm, 30.10.1945
341. To P. Sraffa 1.11.[1945]
342. From the Minutes of the Moral Science Club, 15.11.1945
343. To N. Malcolm, 4.12.1945
344. From the Minutes of the Moral Science Club, 6.12.1945
345. To N. Malcolm, 15.12.1945

1946

346. To N. Malcolm, 15.1.1946
347. From J. Taylor, 22.1.1946
348. To R. Rhees, 7.2.1946
349. To R. Rhees, 20.4.[1946]
350. To N. Malcolm, 25.4.1946
351. To W. G. Maclagan, 8.5.1946
352. To R. Rhees, 21.5.1946
353. To G. E. Moore, [October 1946]
354. To R. Rhees, 15.10.1946
355. From the Minutes of the Moral Science Club, 26.10.1946
356. To R. Rhees, 28.10.1946
357. To G. E. Moore, 14.11.1946
358. From the Minutes of the Moral Science Club, 14.11.1946
359. To G. E. Moore, 3.12.1946

1947

360. To G. E. Moore, 18.2.1947

361. To G. H. von Wright, 21.2.1947
362. From J. Wisdom, 25.3.1947
363. To J. Wisdom, 28.3.1947
364. From J. Wisdom, 1.4.1947
365. To R. Rhees, 30.4.1947
366. To G. H. von Wright, 6.6.1947
367. To J. T. Saunders (Assistant Registrary), 8.6.1947
368. To J. T. Saunders, 18.6.1947
369. To Y. Smythies, 27.7.1947
370. From G. H. von Wright, 31.7.1947
371. To G. H. von Wright, 27.8.1947
372. To P. Sraffa, 10.10.1947
373. From the Minutes of the Moral Science Faculty Board, 13.10.1947
374. To G. E. Moore, [November 1947]
375. To P. Sraffa, 5.11.1947
376. To G. H. von Wright, 6.11.1947
377. To R. Rhees, 9.12.1947
378. To G. H. von Wright, 22.12.1947

1948

379. To R. Rhees, 5.2.1948
380. To N. Malcolm, 5.2.1948
381. To G. H. von Wright, 23.2.1948
382. To N. Malcolm, 15.3.1948
383. To G. H. von Wright, 17.3.1948
384. To R. Rhees, 15.4.1948
385. To N. Malcolm, 30.4.1948
386. To R. Rhees, 1.5.1948
387. To N. Malcolm, [after 9.5.1948]
388. To N. Malcolm, 4.6.1948
389. To R. Rhees, 23.6.1948
390. To N. Malcolm, 5.7.1948
391. To T. Redpath, 22.7.1948
392. To R. Rhees, [20.8.1948]
393. To N. Malcolm, 6.11.1948
394. To G. E. Moore, 16.12.1948
395. To G. E. Moore, 31.12.1948

1949

396. To N. Malcolm, 28.1.1949
397. To N. Malcolm, 18.2.1949

398. To R. Rhees, 16.3.1949
399. To L. and N. Malcolm, 19.3.1949
400. To N. Malcolm, 1.4.1949
401. To N. Malcolm, 17.5.1949
402. To G. H. von Wright, 24.5.1949
403. To G. H. von Wright, 1.6.1949
404. To N. Malcolm, 4.6.1949
405. To G. H. von Wright, 8.6.1949
406. To N. Malcolm, 14.6.1949
407. To G. H. von Wright, [before 20.6.1949]
408. To N. Malcolm, 8.7.1949
409. To P. Sraffa, [11.7.1949]
410. To P. Sraffa, 23.8.1949
411. To N. Malcolm, [end November 1949]
412. To R. Rhees, [2.12.1949]
413. To N. Malcolm, 11.12.1949
414. To N. Malcolm, 29.12.1949

1950

415. To R. Rhees, 3.1.1950
416. To N. Malcolm, 16.1.1950
417. To G. H. von Wright, 19.1.1950
418. To R. Rhees, 22.1.1950
419. To G. H. von Wright, 12.2.1950
420. To N. Malcolm, 12.2.1950
421. To N. Malcolm, 5.4.1950
422. To N. Malcolm, 17.4.1950
423. To G. H. von Wright, 28.4.[1950]
424. To R. Rhees, [7.5.1950]
425. To P. Sraffa, 10.7.1950
426. To N. and L. Malcolm, 30.7.1950
427. To G. H. von Wright, 6.9.1950
428. To P. Sraffa, [24.10.1950]
429. To N. Malcolm, 1.12.1950
430. To G. H. von Wright, 7.12.1950

1951

431. To N. and L. Malcolm, 2.1.1951
432. To N. Malcolm, 12.1.1951
433. To N. Malcolm, [after 6.2.1951]
434. To R. Rhees, 9.3.1951

435. To R. Rhees, [14.3.1951]
436. To N. Malcolm, 19.3.1951
437. To R. Rhees, 30.3.1951
438. To N. Malcolm, 16.4.1951
439. Fellow's memorial tablet in Trinity College chapel

1912

1. To B. Russell, [11.6.1912]

4 Rose Cr[escent, Cambridge]
Tuesday 1 a:m

Dear Mr Russell,

I feel very much tempted to write to you although I have very little to say. I have just been reading a part of Moore's Principia Ethica: (now please don't be shocked) I do not like it at all. (Mind you, quite *apart* from disagreeing with most of it.) I don't believe – or rather I am sure – that it cannot dream of comparing with Frege's or your own works (except perhaps some of the Phil[osophical] Essays). Moore repeats himself dozens of times, what he says in 3 pages could – I believe – easily be expressed in half a page. *Unclear* statements don't get a bit clearer by being repeated!! – The concert of the 7th of June was most gorgeous! I wish you had heard it. I need not say that I miss you awfully and that I wish I knew how you are and that I am

Yours most, etc.
Ludwig Wittgenstein

P.S. My logic is all in the melting-pot.

Phil[osophical] Essays – In its first edition (1910) this collection of Russell's contained a number of papers "concerned with ethical subjects" ("The Elements of Ethics", "The Free Man's Worship", etc.), which are probably referred to here.

concert of the 7th of June – That of the Cambridge University Musical Society. A Miss Harrison performed in Beethoven's Violin Concerto. This letter was presumably written on the 11th, being the Tuesday following.

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2. To B. Russell, 22.6.1912

Cambridge 22.6.12.

Dear Russell,

There are yet some nice events happening in one's life e.g. getting a letter from you (thanks *very* much for it). Much less nice is the following event: I had a discussion with Myers about the relations between Logic and Psychology. I was very candid and I am sure he thinks that I am the most arrogant devil who ever lived. Poor Mrs Myers who was also present got – I think – quite wild about me. However, I think he was a bit less confused after the discussion than before. – Whenever I have time I now read James's "Varieties of religious exp[erience]". This book does me a *lot* of good. I don't mean to say that I will be a saint soon, but I am not sure that it does not improve me a little in a way in which I would like to improve *very much*: namely I think that it helps me to get rid of the *Sorge* (in the sense in which Goethe used the word in the 2nd part of Faust). Logic is still in the melting-pot but one thing gets more and more obvious to me: The prop[osition]s of Logic contain ONLY APPARENT variables and whatever may turn out to be the proper explanation of apparent variables, its consequence *must* be that there are NO *logical* constants.

Logic must turn out to be of a TOTALLY different kind than any other science.

The piece of poetry which you sent me is *most* splendid! DO come to Cambridge soon.

Yours most, etc.
Ludwig Wittgenstein

I am staying here till about the 20th of July.

Myers – Charles Samuel Myers (1873–1946) taught psychology at Cambridge and founded the psychological laboratory there in 1912. One of Myers' special interests was the psychology of music, a topic on which Wittgenstein did some experimental research during these years at Cambridge. In a letter to Lady Ottoline Morrell, Russell tells that Wittgenstein, at the opening of the laboratory in May 1913, had exhibited an apparatus for psychological investigation of rhythm. Cf. also **3** and *A Portrait of Wittgenstein as a Young Man: From the Diary of David Hume Pinsent 1912–1914*, ed. G. H. von Wright, intro. Anne Pinsent Keynes (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990), p. 3 and *passim*.

poetry – Perhaps by Russell, who had in April and May 1912 written several poems and showed them to Lady Ottoline.

3. To B. Russell, 1.7.1912

1.7.12.

Dear Russell,

Thank you very much for your kind letter.

Will you think that I have gone mad if I make the following suggestion?: The sign (x).φx is not a complete symbol but has meaning only in an inference of the kind: from ⊢φx⊃$_x$ ψx. φ(a) follows ψa. Or more generally: from ⊢(x). φx.ε$_0$(a) follows φ(a). I am – of course – most uncertain about the matter but something of the sort might really be true. I am sorry I cannot spend as much time on thinking about this stuff as I would like to because I have to write a *most* absurd paper on rhythms for the psychological meeting on the 13th. – I hear just now that a sister of mine is going to visit me here on the 6th. Would you mind me introducing her to you? She ought to see everything worth seeing!

Yours most, etc.
Ludwig Wittgenstein

paper on rhythms – Probably on the difference between perceived and real rhythms, see B. McGuinness, *Young Ludwig*, pp. 125–8.

a sister of mine – This was Wittgenstein's eldest sister, Hermine, who records a meeting with Russell in her memoirs of the family (see R. Rhees, *Ludwig Wittgenstein: Personal Recollections* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1981), pp. 3, 15).

4. To B. Russell, [Summer 1912]

Hochreit
Post Hohenberg
N[ieder]-Ö[sterreich]

Dear Russell,

The above address and this perfectly earthly writing paper will show you that I am not in hell. In fact I am quite well again and philosophizing for all I am worth. What troubles me most at present, is not the apparent-variable-business, but rather the meaning of "$\vee$", ".", "$\supset$" etc. This latter problem is – I think – still more fundamental and, if possible, still less recognized as a problem. *If* "$p \vee q$" means a complex at all – which is quite doubtful – *then*, as far as I can see, one must treat "$\vee$" as *part* of a copula, in the way we have talked over before. I have – I believe – tried all possible ways of solution *under that hypothesis* and found that if any one will do it *must* be something like this: Let us write the prop[osition] "from p and q follows r" that way: "i[p; q; r]". Here "i" is a copula (we may call it inference) which copulates *complexes*. Then "$\varepsilon_1(x, y).\vee.\varepsilon_1(u, z)$" is to mean:

"$\vdash(\varepsilon_1(x, y), \varepsilon_1(z, u), \beta(x, y, z, u)).i[\varepsilon_1(x, y); \varepsilon_1(z, u); \beta(x, y, z, u)]$
$\vdash(\varepsilon_1(x, y), \varepsilon_1(z, u), \beta(x, y, z, u)).i[\sim\varepsilon_1(x, y); \varepsilon_1(z, u); \beta(x, y, z, u)]$
$\vdash(\varepsilon_1(x, y), \varepsilon_1(z, u), \beta(x, y, z, u)).i[\varepsilon_1(x, y); \sim\varepsilon_1(z, u); \beta(x, y, z, u)]$
$\vdash(\varepsilon_1(x, y), \varepsilon_1(z, u), \beta(x, y, z, u)).i[\sim\varepsilon_1(x, y); \sim\varepsilon_1(z, u); \beta(x, y, z, u)]$
$\vdash\beta(x, y, z, u)$".

If "$p \vee q$" does not mean a complex, then heaven knows what it means!! –

Now I would like to know how you are and *all* about you! If you are so good to write to me, please write to the following address:

L.W. *junior* (please don't forget this)
bei Paul Wittgenstein
Oberalm bei Hallein
Salzburg Austria

We have excellent weather here, such that one can do most thinking in the open air. There is nothing more wonderful in the world than the *true* problems of Philosophy.

Always yours most, etc.
Ludwig Wittgenstein

The dating of the letter is by Russell. Witttgenstein had left Cambridge for Austria on 15 July.

Hochreit – The estate Hochreit in Lower Austria had belonged to Wittgenstein's father since 1894. The family used to live there during the summer. Later in life too, when he had again settled at Cambridge, Wittgenstein often visited the Hochreit and worked there. A considerable part of his literary Nachlass was stored at the Hochreit and discovered after his death.

this perfectly earthly writing paper . . . not in hell – The allusion seems to be lost, though it may be connected with Russell's exclamation to Wittgenstein, 'Logic is hell!', recounted to and then by Norman Malcolm, *Ludwig Wittgenstein: A Memoir* (London: Oxford University Press, 1958; 2nd edn 1984), p. 57.

"$p \vee q$" – There seems to be an error in the symbolic expression for a disjunction above. The fourth inference should be "$i[\sim\varepsilon_1(x, y); \sim\varepsilon_1(z, u); \sim\beta(x, y, z, u)]$". Also the order of the variables in the definiendum should be "$\varepsilon_1 (z, u)$".

L.W. junior – An uncle of Wittgenstein's was also called Ludwig (or Louis).

Paul Wittgenstein – Another uncle of Ludwig Wittgenstein's. He seems to have been the only one in the family circle who encouraged Ludwig's work in philosophy. In an early version of the Preface to the *Tractatus* Wittgenstein acknowledges his gratitude to his uncle for this.

5. To B. Russell, 16.8.1912

Oberalm bei Hallein
Salzburg
16.8.12.

Dear Russell,

Thanks for your letter. I am glad you read the lives of Mozart and Beethoven. These are the actual sons of God. Now as to "p ∨ q", etc.: I have thought that possibility – namely that all our troubles could be overcome by assuming different sorts of Relations of signs to things – over and over and over again! for the last 8 weeks!!! But I have come to the conclusion that this assumption does *not* help us a bit. In fact if you work out ANY such theory – I believe you will see that *it does not even touch our problem*. I have lately seen a new way out (or perhaps not out) of the difficulty. It is too long to be explained here, but I tell you so much that it is based on new forms of propositions. For instance: $\prec$(p. q), which is to mean "the complex p has the opposite form of q's form". That means that $\prec$(p. q) holds for instance when p is ε_1(a, b) and q is $\sim\varepsilon_1$(c, d). Another instance of the new forms is ψ(p, q, r) which means something like: "The form of the comp[lex] r is composed of the forms of p and q in the way 'or'." That means that ψ(p, q, r) holds for instance when p is ε_1(a, b), q is ε_1(c, d) and r is ε_1(e, f) ∨ ε_1(g, h) etc. The rest I leave to your imagination. All this however seems to me *not half* as important as the fact (if it is one) that the whole problem has become very much clearer to me now than it has ever been before. I wish you were here and I could tell you the whole matter for I cannot write it down; it is MUCH too long! Also the app[arent] var[iable]-business has become by far clearer.

Do write again SOON!

Yours most, etc.
Ludwig Wittgenstein

I feel like mad.

lives of Mozart and Beethoven – It is a reasonable surmise that these were two articles by Russell's friend D. F. Tovey in the 11th edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1910–11).

the actual sons of God – An echo of Goethe's "die echten Göttersöhne" in the Prologue in Heaven of *Faust*: whom the Lord enjoins to "enfold / With praise the abundant beauty of the world / . . . Its vanishing phenomena will last, / By your angelic thoughts made firm and fast" (*Faust*, part I, trans. D. A. Luke (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987)).

6. To B. Russell, [Summer 1912]

Dear Russell,

I believe that our problems can be traced down to the *atomic* prop[osition]s. This you will see if you try to explain precisely in what way the Copula in such a prop[osition] has meaning.

I cannot explain it and I think that as soon as an exact answer to this question is given the problems of "$\vee$" and of the app[arent] var[iable] will be brought *very* near their solution if not solved. I therefore now think about "Socrates is human". (Good old Socrates!). My Iceland boat leaves Leith on the 7th and I am going to be in Cambridge and London from the 3rd to the 6th. I wonder if I can see you anywhere in that time? I have just read "Chadschi-Murat" by Tolstoy! Have you ever read it? If not, you ought to for it is *wonderful*. I am awfully sorry you have such beastly weather in England! Come with me to Iceland!

Yours most, etc., etc.
L. Wittgenstein

My Iceland boat – Wittgenstein and his friend David Pinsent left Leith, the port of Edinburgh, on 7 September 1912 for a journey to Iceland which lasted four weeks. For details of their journey, see Pinsent, *A Portrait*, pp. 9–32.

7. From the Minutes of the Moral Science Club, 29.11.1912

Mr Wittgenstein read a paper entitled "What is Philosophy?" The paper lasted only about 4 minutes thus cutting the previous record established by Mr Tye by nearly two minutes. Philosophy was defined as all those primitive propositions which are assumed as true without proof by the various sciences. This definition was much discussed but there was no general disposition to accept it.

At an earlier meeting that term the Club had adopted the following rule: "The whole object of papers read shall be, as a general rule, to open a discussion, and therefore no paper shall last longer than seven minutes, except by special permission of the Chairman on a special occasion." This was part of what Moore in his diary described as Wittgenstein's attempt to make him a kind of dictator in the Club. See **120** below.

8. To B. Russell, 26.12.1912

IV. Alleegasse 16
Wien
26.12.12.

Dear Russell,

On arriving here I found my father *very* ill. There is no hope that he may recover. These circumstances have – I am afraid – rather lamed my thoughts and I am muddled although I struggle against it.

I had a long discussion with Frege about our Theory of Symbolism of which, I think, he roughly understood the general outline. He said he would think the matter over. The complex problem is now clearer to me and I hope very much that I may solve it. I wish I knew how you are and what sort of time you are having, and all about you!

Yours ever most, etc.
Ludwig Wittgenstein

Alleegasse – The street in which the house belonging to Wittgenstein's parents stood, a pompous building in nineteenth-century baroque style. The name of the street was later changed to Argentinierstrasse. This house served as a centre for Wittgenstein later in life: he dictated from and stored manuscripts there. On his last visit to Vienna round the New Year 1950, he ordered a number of these (from the time of the germination of the *Tractatus*) to be burnt. (See Editor's Preface to *Notebooks 1914–1916*, with appendix "Notes dictated to G. E. Moore in Norway", 2nd edn, ed. G. E. M. Anscombe and G. H. von Wright (Oxford: Blackwell, 1979).)

1913

9. To J. M. Keynes, 3.1.1913

IV. Alleegasse 16
3.1.13.

Dear Keynes,

Thanks for your very kind letter. I thought of writing to you just before I got it to tell you that I will not be able to come over to England until or after the beginning of term, there being all sorts of troubles at home. – I excuse your slanging Philosophy as you were just coming from McTaggart and just thinking of me when you did it. I am very glad to hear that you had a good time.

Yours, etc., etc.
Ludwig Wittgenstein

troubles at home – Wittgenstein is evidently referring to the serious illness of his father mentioned in **8**.

McTaggart – J. McT. E. McTaggart (1866–1925), Fellow and Lecturer of Trinity College, Cambridge, an Hegelian, one of Cambridge's leading philosophers.

just thinking of me – Presumably a miswriting, by dittography, for "not thinking of me".

10. To B. Russell, 6.1.1913

IV. Alleegasse 16
Wien
6.1.13.

Dear Russell,

I am very sorry not yet to have had a line from you!!! Not that there was anything in my last letter to you, that wanted answering; but you might have guessed that I feel von allen guten Geistern verlassen and that therefore I want a letter from you very necessarily. However – I may not be able to come back to Cambridge at the beginning of Term, as the illness of my poor father is growing very rapidly.

The Complex Problem is getting clearer to me every day and I wish I could write clear enough to let you know what I think of it. Logic is a very good Invention.

Immer der Ihrige
Ludwig Wittgenstein

von allen guten Geistern verlassen / abandoned by all good spirits – colloquially used to mean: "beside myself", "out of my mind".

Immer der Ihrige – yours ever.

11. To B. Russell, January 1913

IV. Alleegasse 16
Jan[uary] 1913

Dear Russell,

Thanks *very* much for both your kind letters! I cannot yet tell when I shall be able to come back to Cambridge, as the doctors are still quite uncertain about the duration of my father's illness. He has not yet any pains but feels on the whole *very* bad having constantly high fever. This makes him so apathetic that one cannot do him any good by sitting at his bed, etc. And as this was the only thing that I could ever do for him, I am now perfectly useless here. So the time of my staying here depends entirely upon whether the illness will take so rapid a course that I could not risk to leave Vienna; or not. I hope I shall be able to decide this in a week's time and I have told Fletcher so. – I have changed my views on "atomic" complexes: I now think that Qualities, Relations (like Love), etc. are all copulae! That means I for instance analyse a subject-predicate prop[osition], say, "Socrates is human" into "Socrates" and "Something is human" (which I think is not complex). The reason for this, is a very fundamental one: I think that there cannot be different Types of things! In other words whatever can be symbolized by a simple proper name must belong to one type. And further: every theory of types must be rendered superfluous by a proper theory of the symbolism: For instance if I analyse the prop[osition] Socrates is mortal into Socrates, Mortality and $(\exists x, y)\ \varepsilon_1(x, y)$ I want a theory of types to tell me that "Mortality is Socrates" is nonsensical, because if I treat "Mortality" as a proper name (as I did) there is nothing to prevent me to make the substitution the wrong way round. *But* if I analyse [it] (as I do now) into Socrates and $(\exists x)x$ is mortal or generally into x and $(\exists x)\varphi(x)$* it becomes impossible to substitute the wrong way round, because the two symbols are now of a different *kind* themselves. What I am *most* certain of is not however the correctness of my present way of analysis, but of the fact that all theory of types must be done away with by a theory of symbolism showing that what seem to be *different kinds of things* are symbolised by different kinds of symbols which *cannot* possibly be substituted in one another's places. I hope I have made this fairly clear!

I was *very* interested to hear your views about matter, although I cannot imagine your way of working from sense-data forward. Mach writes such a horrid style that it makes me nearly sick to read him; however, I am very glad that you think so much of a countryman of mine.

Yours most, etc.
Ludwig Wittgenstein

* Prop[osition]s which I formerly wrote $\varepsilon_2(a, R, b)$ I now write R(a, b) and analyse them into a, b, and $\underbrace{(\exists x, y)\ R(x, y)}_{\text{not complex}}$

Letter dated by Russell.

Fletcher – W. M. Fletcher (1873–1933), later Sir Walter, physiologist and administrator, was a Fellow of Trinity College, where he was at this time Wittgenstein's Tutor.

Mach – Ernst Mach (1838–1976) was born in Moravia and hence in Austria-Hungary.

12. To B. Russell, 21.1.1913

IV. Alleegasse 16
21.1.13.

Dear Russell,

My dear father died yesterday in the afternoon. He had the most beautiful death that I can imagine; without the slightest pains and falling asleep like a child! I did not feel sad for a single moment during all the last hours, but most joyful and I think that this death was worth a whole life.

I will leave Vienna on Saturday the 25th and will be in Cambridge either on Sunday night or Monday morning. I long very much to see you again.

Yours ever
Ludwig Wittgenstein

13. To B. Russell, 25.3.1913

IV. Alleegasse 16
Wien
25.3.13.

Dear Russell,

I can't refrain from writing to you, although I have nothing to tell you. I am as perfectly sterile as I never was, and I doubt whether I shall ever again get ideas. Whenever I try to think about Logic, my thoughts are so vague that nothing ever can crystallize out. What I feel is the curse of all those who have only half a talent; it is like a man who leads you along a dark corridor with a light and just when you are in the middle of it the light goes out and you are left alone. –

I suppose you are staying with the Whiteheads at present and hope you are having a good time. If once you have nothing better to do, do send me a line letting me know how you are, etc., etc.

L. Wittgenstein

Whiteheads – Alfred North Whitehead (1861–1947) and his wife. He was joint author with Russell of *Principia Mathematica*.

14. To B. Russell, [June 1913]

Dear Russell,

My mother will stay at the Savoy Hotel. So we shall expect you there on Wednesday about 1–15. By the by, please remember that my mother must not know that I was operated last July (if by any chance the conversation should turn on such topics).

I can now express my objection to your theory of judgment exactly: I believe it is obvious that, from the prop[osition] "A judges that (say) a is in the Rel[ation] R to b", if correctly analysed, the prop[osition] "aRb.∨.~aRb" must follow directly *without the use of any other premiss*. This condition is not fulfilled by your theory.

Yours ever

L.W.

Letter dated by Russell. According to Russell's appointments diary for 1912–13, the lunch was to be on Wednesday, 18 June.

operated – An operation for a rupture. Wittgenstein had been exempted from military service because of a rupture. He volunteered, however, for the Austrian army immediately after the outbreak of the war in 1914, and was accepted.

your theory of judgment – The reference evidently is to a projected work on the theory of knowledge which Russell was then writing. Only the first six chapters were published during Russell's lifetime (in *The Monist*, January 1914–April 1915). The whole manuscript was published posthumously as *Theory of Knowledge*, vol. 7 of Russell's *Collected Papers*, ed. E. Ramsden Eames with K. Blackwell (London: Allen & Unwin; Boston: Sydney, 1983). See also note on **17**.

15. To J. M. Keynes, 22.6.1913

Midland Hotel
Manchester
22.6.13.

Dear Keynes,

You will perhaps remember that I once told you I wished to give some money to the research fund – or whatever you call it – of King's Coll[ege] in order to let Johnson have it. I was then not decided as to whether I would give a capital sum once for all, or two hundred pounds every year. The latter way has turned out to be by far the most convenient to me. Now I do not know when and to whom to send the money, etc., etc. and as you are the only person who knows about the matter and I do not wish to tell any one else of my acquaintances I cannot help asking your advice about it. You would oblige me very much if you kindly wrote to me about it, unless there is time for your advice till October, when of course I shall be up at Cambridge. My address till the middle of August will be: L. W. *jun*. IV. Alleegasse 16, Austria, Wien.

Yours truly
Ludwig Wittgenstein

Johnson – W. E. Johnson (1858–1931), Fellow of King's College and Lecturer in the University of Cambridge, subsequently author of a treatise on Logic in three volumes (1921–4), had been appointed as Wittgenstein's supervisor. The two men found it difficult to talk about logic (see notes on **111** below) but formed a warm friendship none the less. Wittgenstein arranged to give a grant of £200 a year in order to enable Johnson to cut down his teaching commitments and have more time for research. Cf. R. F. Harrod, *The Life of John Maynard Keynes* (London: Macmillan, 1951), p. 162.

16. To J. M. Keynes, 16.7.1913

Post Hohenberg
N[ieder]-Ö[sterreich]
16.7.13.

Dear Keynes,

Thanks very much for the trouble you take over my business. – *My* reason for not seeing you oftener last term was, that I did not wish our intercourse to continue without any sign that *you* wished to continue it.

Yours sincerely
Ludwig Wittgenstein

17. To B. Russell, 22.7.1913

Hochreit
Post Hohenberg
N[ieder]-Ö[sterreich]
22.7.13.

Dear Russell,

Thanks for your kind letter. My work goes on well; every day my problems get clearer now and I feel rather hopeful. All my progress comes out of the idea that the *indefinables* of Logic are of the general kind (in the same way as the so called *Definitions* of Logic are general) and this again comes from the abolition of the real variable. Perhaps you laugh at me for feeling so sanguine at present; but although I have not solved *one* of my problems I feel very, very much nearer to the solution of them all than I ever felt before.

The weather here is constantly rotten, we have not yet had two fine days in succession. I am very sorry to hear that my objection to your theory of judgment paralyses you. I think it can only be removed by a correct theory of propositions. Let me hear from you soon.

Yours ever, etc.
L.W.

paralyses you – In a 1916 letter to Lady Ottoline Morrell, quoted in his *Autobiography* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1967), vol. II, p. 57, Russell wrote: "Do you remember that at the time . . . I wrote a lot of stuff about Theory of Knowledge, which Wittgenstein criticized with the greatest severity? His criticism . . . was an event of first-rate importance in my life, and affected everything I have done since. I saw he was right, and I saw that I could not hope ever again to do fundamental work in philosophy. My impulse was shattered, like a wave dashed to pieces against a breakwater."

18. To B. Russell, [Summer 1913]

Hochreit
Post Hohenberg
Nieder-Österreich
Austria

Dear Russell,

Would you be so kind as to forward the enclosed letter to Mrs W., I have forgotten her address. I am afraid there are no logical news today. The weather here is most abominable, it rains all the day like mad. Just now a crash of thunder came down and I said "Hell!", which shews that English swear-words are well in my bones. I hope I can send you some logical news soon. If you have nothing better to do *please* let me know how you are, etc.

Yours ever most, etc.
L.W.

Mrs W. – Presumably Mrs Alfred North Whitehead.

19. To B. Russell, [Summer 1913]

Hochreit
Post Hohenberg
N[ieder]-Ö[sterreich]

Dear Russell,

Your axiom of reducibility is $\vdash:(\exists f):\varphi x \equiv_x f!x$; now is this not all nonsense as this prop[osition] has only then a meaning if we can turn the φ into an *apparent* variable. For if we cannot do so no general laws can ever follow from your axiom. The whole axiom seems to me at present a mere juggling trick. Do let me know if there is more in it. The axiom as you have put it is only a schema and the real *Pp* ought to be $\vdash: . (\varphi):(\exists f):\varphi(x) \equiv_x f!x$, and where would be the use of that?!

Thanks for your letter. I am working very hard. I look forward VERY much to see you in one of the last days of August because I have lots and lots of things to tell you.

Yours ever, etc.
L.W.

Pp – Primitive proposition.

20. To B. Russell, [1913]

Dear Russell,

This is a secondhand copy of Lichtenberg but I couldn't get another one. I hope you'll enjoy some of it at least. Let me hear from you again.

Yours ever

Ludwig Wittgenstein

Lichtenberg – This "letter" is in fact the dedication that Wittgenstein wrote in a copy of the Reclam edition of Georg Christoph Lichtenberg's *Ausgewählte Schriften* (the selection by Eugen Reichel), which Russell kept to the end of his life and which is now in the McMaster University Library. There are nine or ten side-linings and underlinings, presumably by Wittgenstein (at any rate it was his practice to steer friends' reading in this way), so, for example, at the epigram: "The question 'Should one philosophize for oneself?' is like the question, 'Should one shave oneself?' the answer is, Yes, if one can do it well."

21. To B. Russell, 5.9.1913

5.9.13.

Dear Russell,

I am sitting here in a little place inside a beautiful fiord and thinking about the beastly theory of types. There are still some *very* difficult problems (and very fundamental ones too) to be solved and I won't begin to write until I have got some sort of a solution for them. However I don't think that will in any way affect the Bipolarity business which still seems to me to be absolutely untangible. Pinsent is an enormous comfort to me here. We have hired a little sailing boat and go about with it on the fiord, or rather Pinsent is doing all the sailing and I sit in the boat and work. Shall I get anything out??! It would be awful if I did not and all my work would be lost. However I am not losing courage and go on thinking. Pray for me!

If you see the Whiteheads please remember me to them. My address for the next 3 weeks shall be: Hotel Öistensjö, Öistensjö, Norway.

If you've nothing better to do, *do* write to me how you are, etc.

I very often now have the indescribable feeling as though my work was all sure to be lost entirely in some way or other. But I still hope that this won't come true. Whatever happens don't forget me!

Yours ever most, etc.

L.W.

Öistensjö – We know from the diary which Wittgenstein's friend David Pinsent kept of their journey to Norway that the place was situated on the Hardangerfjord. (The two travellers had reached it by boat from Bergen.) The place, in all probability is that whose name is (nowadays) spelt Öystese. It is likely that the name in 1913 was quite commonly spelt Öistesö, but Wittgenstein's own spelling here appears to be in error. The spelling Östensö used in the next letter appears on some maps of the time. This information was kindly supplied by the late Mr Olav Flo of Bergen.

About Wittgenstein's time in Norway together with Pinsent, see Pinsent, *A Portrait*, pp. 59–86.

22. To B. Russell, 20.9.1913

Östensö
Norway
20.9.13.

Dear Russell,

Types are not yet solved but I have had all sorts of ideas which seem to me very fundamental. Now the feeling that I shall have to die before being able to publish them is growing stronger and stronger in me every day and my greatest wish would therefore be to communicate *everything* I have done so far to you, *as soon as possible*. Don't think that I believe that my ideas are very important but I cannot help feeling that they might help people to avoid *some* errors. Or am I mistaken? If so don't take *any notice* of this letter. I have of course no judgment at all as to whether my ideas are worth preserving after my death or not. And perhaps it is ridiculous of me even to consider this question at all. But if this is ridiculous please try to excuse this foolishness of mine because it is not a superficial foolishness but the deepest of which I am capable. I see that the further I get on with this letter the less I dare to come to my Point. But my point is this: I want to ask you to let me meet you *as soon as possible* and give me time enough to give you a survey of the whole field of what I have done up to now and if possible to let me make notes for you *in your presence*. I shall arrive in London on the 1st of Oct[ober] and shall have to be in London again on Oct[ober] 3rd (evening). Otherwise I am not fixed in any way and can meet you wherever you like. My address will be the Grand Hotel. – I know that it may be both arrogant and silly to ask you what I have asked you. But such I am and think of me what you like. I will *always* be yours

L.W.

Notes – See notes to **23**.

in London again on Oct[ober] – Russell noted on the typescript he had made of this letter: "This letter is endorsed in my handwriting 'Oct. 4, 1 p.m.', so I responded to his appeal." From a letter to Lady Ottoline we know that Wittgenstein came to see Russell at Cambridge as early as 2 October.

23. To B. Russell, 17.[10].1913

Nordre Bergenhus Amts Dampskibe, Bergen
Dampskibet Kommandör d. 17.[10].1913

Dear Russell,

My address is going to be: L.W. c/o Halvard Draegni, Skjolden, Sogn, Norway. I am not yet there. – *Identity is the very Devil*! Types have got a good deal clearer to me on the journey. Hope you have got typewritten business all right. I saw Whitehead before going and he was charming as usual. Let me hear from you *as soon as possible*; I want it badly! Give my love to everybody who wants it.

Yours as long as there is such a thing as
L.W.

P.S. I am not as far north as I thought I would be as the Inn I intended to stay at is closed during the winter.

Wittgenstein actually wrote "17.9". This must be a slip of the pen for 17.10.

In this and the next three letters there is reference to the "Notes on Logic", published posthumously as an appendix to the *Notebooks 1914–1916*. The composition and history of these notes once puzzled students of Wittgenstein's work and the editors (Anscombe and G. H. von Wright) of the Notebooks. Thanks to the subsequent accessibility of new material in the Bertrand Russell Archives it is hoped that we now have a coherent and convincing picture of the whole matter. See B. McGuinness's study "Bertrand Russell and Ludwig Wittgenstein's 'Notes on Logic'", *Revue Internationale de Philosophie* 102 (1972) (devoted to Russell's philosophy), reprinted in McGuinness (ed.), *Approaches to Wittgenstein: Collected Papers* (London: Routledge, 2002). The basic facts needed for understanding the references to the Notes in the letters are as follows:

In the course of 2–9 October 1913 Wittgenstein saw Russell at Cambridge and tried to explain his ideas. Russell, finding it difficult to grasp and remember what Wittgenstein told him, procured a shorthand writer to whom Wittgenstein dictated a "summary" of his thoughts on logic. Of these dictations, some at least of which were in English, Russell evidently had a typescript prepared. This is the typescript to which Wittgenstein refers in this letter (**23**) as "[the] typewritten business" and in letter **26** as "the typed stuff". This typescript, with corrections by Wittgenstein and Russell, is now in the Bertrand Russell Archives and it contains the misprint ("polarity" for "bi-polarity") referred to in **26**. In **25** and **26**, however, Wittgenstein also speaks of a manuscript and in **27** he comments on questions put to him by Russell which evidently relate to that manuscript and also quotes from it – in German. No such German manuscript is preserved. But there exists an English manuscript in Russell's hand entitled "Wittgenstein" and bearing the sub-headings "First MS", "2nd MS", "3rd MS", and "4th MS". It is evidently Russell's translation into English of a German manuscript (in four parts) which Wittgenstein had sent to Russell after their meeting at Cambridge (see **25**). Since he (in **25**) refers to it as a "copy", it must have been taken (dictated or excerpted) from an original. Later the same winter Russell made a re-arrangement of all this material, providing headings for its main sections. This re-arrangement is the so-called Costello version of the "Notes on Logic", later published in the first edition (1961) of *Notebooks 1914–1916*, while the second edition (1979) reverts to the original form of the material, "Summary", "First MS", etc. (Readers should be warned that the index printed in the second edition is in fact based on the first edition.)

far north – Wittgenstein's original intention seems to have been to go to Molde in the far north after his return to Norway from England in October 1913. Instead he went to Skjolden near the innermost part of Sognefjord north of Bergen.

24. To G. E. Moore, [23.10.1913]

Dear Moore,

My address is: L.W. c/o H. Draegni, Skjolden, Sogn, Norway. The place is very nice and I have got plenty of time to work. Identity plays hell with me! Please ask Russell whether he has got my letter because I am not certain if it has been posted. Let me know EXACTLY how you are.

Yours etc. etc.
L. Wittgen.

Picture postcard of Skjolden with "My rooms" indicated by Wittgenstein.

Identity – For the problem see **26** and subsequent letters to Russell.

25. To B. Russell, 29.10.1913

c/o H. Draegni, Skjolden
Sogn, Norway
29.10.13.

Dear Russell,

I hope you have got my letter which I wrote on the 16th. I left it in the Dining room of the boat and afterwards telephoned that it should be posted but I don't know with what effect. This is an ideal place to work in. – Soon after I arrived here I got a violent influenza which prevented me from doing any work until quite recently. Identity is the very Devil and *immensely important*; *very* much more so than I thought. It hangs – like everything else – directly together with the most fundamental questions, especially with the questions concerning the occurrence of the SAME argument in different places of a function. I have all sorts of ideas for a solution of the problem but could not yet arrive at anything definite. However I don't lose courage and go on thinking. – I have got two nice rooms here in the Postmaster's house and am looked after very well indeed. By the way – would you be so good and send me *two* copies of Moore's paper: "The Nature and Reality of Objects of Perception" which he read to the Aristotelian Soc[iety] in 1906. I am afraid I can't yet tell you the reason why I want *two* copies but you shall know it some day. If you kindly send the bill with them I will send the money immediately after receiving the Pamphlets. – As I hardly meet a soul in this place, the progress of my Norwegian is exceedingly slow; so much so that I have not yet learned a single swear-word. Please remember me to Dr and Mrs Whitehead and Erik if you see them. Write to me SOON.

Yours as long as E! L.W.

P.S. How are your conversation-classes going on? Did you get the copy of my manuscript? I enclose a roseleaf as sample of the flora in this place.

30.10.

I wrote this letter yesterday. Since then quite new ideas have come into my head; new problems have arisen in the theory of molecular prop[osition]s and the theory of inference has received a new and very important aspect. One of the consequences of my new ideas will – I think – be that the whole of Logic follows from one P.p. only!! I cannot say more about it at present.

L.W.

Erik – A son of the Whiteheads, subsequently killed in the Great War.

my manuscript – See note on **23**.

26. To B. Russell, [November 1913]

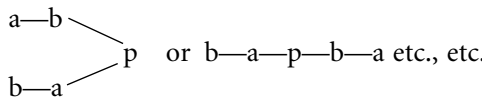
[Skjolden, Sogn, Norway]

Dear Russell,

Thanks for your letter and the typed stuff! I will begin by answering your questions as well as I can:

(1) Your question was – I think – due to the misprint (polarity instead of *bi*polarity). What I mean to say is that we *only* then understand a prop[osition] if we know *both* what would be the case if it was *false and* what if it was *true*.

(2) The symbol for ~p is a—b—p—a—b. The prop[osition] *p* has two poles and it does not matter a hang where they stand you might just as well write ~p like this:



or b—a—p—b—a etc., etc.

all that *is* important is that the new *a*-pole should be correlated to the old *b*-pole and vice versa WHEREVER THESE OLD POLES MAY STAND. If you had only remembered the WF scheme of ~p you would never have asked this question (I think). In fact all rules of the ab symbolism follow directly from the essence of the WF scheme.

(3) Whether ab-f[unctio]ns and your truth-f[unctio]ns are the same cannot yet be decided.

(4) "The correlation of new poles is to be transitive" means that by correlating one pole in the symbolizing way to another and the other to a third we have *thereby* correlated the first in the symbolizing way to the third, etc. For instance in

$$\underline{\underline{\underline{a}}} - \underline{\underline{\underline{b}}} - \underline{\underline{a}} - \underline{b} \not\equiv \underline{a} - \underline{\underline{b}} - \underline{\underline{\underline{a}}} - \underline{\underline{\underline{b}}}$$

$\underline{\underline{\underline{a}}}$ and $\underline{\underline{\underline{b}}}$ are correlated to $\underline{b}$ and $\underline{a}$ respectively and this means that our symbol is the same as a—bpa—b.

(5) (p) p∨~p *is* derived from *the function* p∨~q but the point will only become quite clear when identity is clear (as you said). I will some other time write to you about this matter at length.

(6) Explanation in the typed stuff.

(7) You say, you thought that Bedeutung was the "fact", this is quite true, but remember that there are no such Things as facts and that therefore this prop[osition] itself wants analysing! If we speak of "die Bedeutung" we seem to be speaking of a Thing with a proper name. Of course the symbol for "a fact" is a prop[osition] and this is *no* incomplete symbol.

(8) The exact ab-indefinable is given in the manuscript.

(9) An account of general indefinables? Oh Lord! It is *too* boring!!! Some other time! – Honestly – I *will* write to you about it some time, if by that time you have not found out all about it. (Because it is all quite clear in the manuscript, I think). But just now I am SO troubled with Identity that I really cannot write any long jaw. All sorts of new logical stuff seems to be growing in me, but I can't yet write about it.

Would you do me a great favour: I have promised last year to book *two* serial tickets for the C.U.M.S. Chamber Concerts. Would you kindly book them for me, keep one of them for yourself, give the other to somebody else and charge me for both. If you let me know the price I shall send you the money *at once*.

Pray for me and God bless you! (If there is such a thing).

Yours as long as
$(\exists x).x = L.W.^{*}$

* This prop[osition] will probably turn out to have no meaning. *Write again soon*.

the typed stuff – See note on **23**. Wittgenstein evidently now sent this back to Russell with some corrections and additions (see answers (1) and (6) below). It is printed, under the title "Summary", in *Notebooks 1914–1916*: see especially p. 94 for the points raised here.

Your questions – See **27**.

the WF scheme of ~p – This system (a derivative of truth-tables) is explained in proposition 4.442 of the *Tractatus*. It had been expounded to Russell by Wittgenstein in the last months of 1912 (see McGuinness, *Young Ludwig*, pp. 160–2). Thus it antedates the ab-notation, though perhaps its use in a decision procedure does not.

Bedeutung – "Meaning", nowadays often translated "reference".

the manuscript – See note on **23**. Questions (7), (8), and (9) evidently refer to it. For the "ab-indefinable" see perhaps *Notebooks 1914–1916*, p. 102, 1.1.12–21 (from the "Third MS").

C.U.M.S. – Cambridge University Musical Society.

27. To B. Russell, [November 1913]

[Skjolden, Sogn, Norway]

Dear Russell,

There is the Cheque for 42 Kroner. Thanks very much for having bought the tickets. You haven't yet sent me Miss Harwood's bill! – The following is a list of the questions you asked me in your letter of the 25th.10.:

(1) "What is the point of 'p. ≡ . 'p' is true'? I mean why is it worth saying[?]"

(2) "If 'apb' is the symbol for p, is 'bpa' the symbol for ~p and if not, what is?["]

(3) "What you call ab-functions are what the Principia calls 'truth-f[unctio]ns'. I don't see why you shouldn't stick to the name 'truth-f[unctio]ns'."

(4) "I don't understand your rules about *a*'s and *b*'s, i.e. 'the correlation of new poles is to be transitive'."

(5) (Is obvious from my letter.) So is (6).

(7) "You say 'Weder der Sinn noch die Bedeutung eines Satzes ist ein Ding. Jene Worte sind unvollständige Zeichen'. I understand neither being a *thing*, but I thought the Bedeutung was the *fact*, which is surely not indicated by an incomplete symbol?"

I don't know whether I have answered the question (7) clearly.

The answer is *of course* this: The Bedeutung of a prop[osition] is symbolized by the proposition – which is *of course* not an incomplete symbol, *but the word "Bedeutung"* is an incomplete symbol.

(8) and (9) are obvious.

Write soon!

Yours

L.W.

Miss Harwood's bill – Probably a typist.

Weder der Sinn . . . Zeichen – "Neither the sense nor the meaning of a proposition is a thing. These words are incomplete symbols." This remark occur in the "Third MS". It is printed in *Notebooks 1914–1916*, p. 102, ll. 29–30. That the meaning of a proposition is the fact which actually corresponds to it is stated in the "summary" (ibid., p. 94, ll. 19–20).

28. To B. Russell, [November 1913]

[Skjolden, Sogn, Norway]

Lieber Russell,

I intended to write this letter in German, but it struck me that I did not know whether to call you "Sie" or "Du" and so I am reduced to my beastly English jargon! –

I will begin by explaining why there must be a prop[osition] from which all Logic follows:

I beg you to notice that, although I shall make use in what follows of my ab-Notation, the Meaning of this Notation is not needed; that is to say, even if this Notation should turn out not to be the final correct Notation what I am going to say is valid if you only admit – as I believe you must do – that it is a *possible* Notation. Now listen: I will first talk about those logical prop[osition]s which are or might be contained in the first 8 Chapters of Princ[ipia] Math[ematica]. That they all follow from *one* Pp is clear enough because ONE *symbolic rule* is sufficient to recognize each of them as true or false. And this is the *one* symbolic rule: write the prop[osition] down in the ab-Notation, trace all Connections (of Poles) from the outside to the inside Poles: Then if the b-Pole is connected to such *groups of inside Poles* ONLY *as contain opposite poles of* ONE *prop[osition]*, then the whole prop[osition] is a true, logical prop[osition]. If on the other hand this is the case with the a-Pole the prop[osition] is false and logical. If finally neither is the case the prop[osition] may be true or false but is in no case logical. Such for instance (p).~p – p limited to a suitable type of course – is not a logical prop[osition] at all and its truth can neither be proved nor disproved from logical prop[osition]s alone. The same is the case – by the way – with your axiom of reducibility – *it is not a logical Prop[osition] at all* and the same applies to the axioms of infinity and the mult[iplicative] ax[iom]. IF *these are true prop[osition]s* they are *what I shall call "accidentally" true and not "essentially" true.* Whether a prop[osition] is accidentally or essentially true can be seen by writing it down in the ab-Notation and applying the above rule. What I – in stating this rule – called "logical" prop[osition] is a prop[osition] which is either essentially true or essentially false. This distinction of accid[entally] and essent[ially] true prop[osition]s explains – by the way – the feeling one always had about the infin[ity] ax[iom] and the axiom of reducibility, the feeling that if they were true they would be so only by a lucky accident.

Of course the rule I have given applies first of all only for what you called elementary prop[osition]s. But it is easy to see that it must also apply to all others. For consider your two Pps in the Theory of app[arent] var[iable]s *9.1 and *9.11. Put there instead of φx, (∃y).φy.y = x and it becomes obvious that the special cases of these two Pps like those of all the previous ones becomes tautologous if you apply the ab-Notation. The ab-Notation for Identity is not yet clear enough to show this clearly but it is obvious that such a Notation can be made up. I can sum up by saying that a logical prop[osition] is one the special cases of which are either tautologous – and then the prop[osition] is true – or "self-contradictory" (as I shall call it) and then it is false. And the ab-Notation simply shows directly which of those two it is (if any).

That means that there is *one* Method of proving or disproving all logical prop[osition]s and this is: writing them down in the ab-Notation and looking at the connections and applying the above rule. But if *one* symbolic rule will do, there must also be *one* P.p. that will do. There is much that follows from all this and much that I could only explain vaguely but if you really think it over you will find that I am right. – I am glad that your classes are a success. As to Wiener I can only say that, if he is good at Math[ematics], Math[ematics] isn't much good. However –

Write again soon! And think always well of your

L.W.

P.S. Please remember me to Hardy. Every letter of yours gives me infinite pleasure!

Letter dated by Russell.

In this and the next letter (**30**) Wittgenstein explains the essentials of his decision procedure for the propositional calculus. The invention was evidently made roughly at the time at which Wittgenstein wrote this letter. The method is the one explained in *Tractatus* 6.1203. It is not the same as the now familiar truth-table method. The remark 6.1203, interestingly enough, does not occur in the Prototractatus manuscript or in the typescripts for the book. It was, we know, added only after the completion of the work when Wittgenstein was a prisoner of war at Cassino. (See *Prototractatus*, ed. B. F. McGuinness, T. Nyberg, and G. H. von Wright, with an historical introduction by G. H. von Wright (London: Routledge, 1971), p. 11.) It is interesting that Wittgenstein should have been working on the problem of applying the ab-notation to formulas involving identity with a view to inventing a decision procedure for them, too. He never solved the problem. It is also interesting that he was looking for a decision method for the whole realm of logical truth. This problem, as we now know, cannot be solved.

ONE symbolic rule – Further explained in **30** below.

your axiom of reducibility – In *Principia Mathematica* along with the other "axioms" mentioned. All were later criticized by Wittgenstein, e.g. at *Tractatus* 5.535.

elementary propositions – "A proposition which contains no apparent variables is called "elementary" (*Principia Mathematica*, 3 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1913; 2nd edn 1927), vol. I, p. 127).

your two Pps in the theory of app[arent] var[iable]s – The two primitive propositions are:

$$\begin{array}{lll} *\ 9.1 & \vdash : \varphi x \,.\, \supset \,.\, (\exists z) & \text{Pp} \\ *\ 9.11 & \vdash : \varphi x \vee \varphi y \,.\, \supset \,.\, \varphi z\ (\exists zp)\ \varphi z & \text{Pp} \end{array}$$

Wiener – The reference is evidently to Norbert Wiener (1894–1964), the cyberneticist and polymath, who had received his PhD from Harvard in June 1913 and was now continuing his studies under Russell at Cambridge, England. Wittgenstein presumably met Wiener during his visit to Cambridge earlier in the autumn.

Hardy – G. H. Hardy (1877–1947), generally thought to be (with Littlewood) the leading English mathematician of his time, was a friend and later a sponsor of Wittgenstein's.

29. To G. E. Moore, 19.11.1913

c/o H. Draegni
Skjolden, Sogn, Norway
19.11.13.

Dear Moore,

Many thanks for your P.C. I am very sorry that you feel so miserable at times about your work. I think, the cause of it is, that you don't regularly discuss your stuff with anybody who is not yet stale and is *really* interested in the subject. And I believe that at present there is no such person up at Cambridge. Even Russell – who is of course most extraordinarily fresh for his age – is no more pliable enough for *this* purpose. Don't you think it would be a good thing if we had regular discussions when you come to me at Easter? Not – of course – that I am any good at the subject! But I am not yet stale and care for it very much. I can't help thinking that this would make you lose your feeling of sterility. I think you ought to think about your problems with the view to discussing them with me at Easter. Now don't you think that I am arrogant in saying this! I don't for a moment believe that I could get as clear about your questions as you can, but – as I said before – I am not yet wasted and am very interested in the stuff. *Do* think this over. – Let me hear from you soon.

Yours most, etc.
L. Wittgenstein

30. To B. Russell, [November or December 1913]

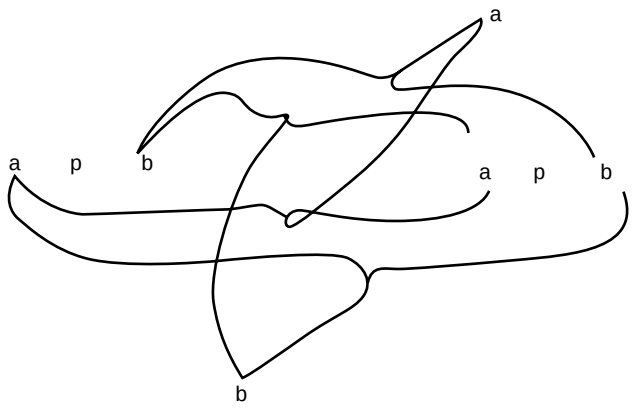
[Skjolden, Sogn, Norway]

Lieber Russell!

Vielen Dank für Deinen lieben Brief. Ich will dasjenige, was ich in meinem letzten Brief über Logik schrieb, noch einmal in anderer Weise wiederholen: Alle Sätze der Logik sind Verallgemeinerungen von Tautologien und alle Verallgemeinerungen von Tautologien sind Sätze der Logik. Andere logische Sätze gibt es nicht. (Dies halte ich für definitiv.) Ein Satz wie „$(\exists x) \,.\, x = x$“ z.B. ist eigentlich ein Satz der *Physik*. Der Satz

$$\text{„}(x) : x = x \,.\, \supset \,.\, (\exists y) \,.y = y\text{“}$$

ist ein Satz der Logik; es ist nun Sache der *Physik* zu sagen, *ob es ein Ding gibt*. Dasselbe gilt vom infin[ity] ax[iom]; ob es $\aleph_0$ Dinge gibt, das zu bestimmen ist Sache der Erfahrung (und die kann es nicht entscheiden). Nun aber zu Deinem Reductions-Axiom: Stell' Dir vor, wir lebten in einer Welt, worin es nichts als $\aleph_0$ *Dinge* gäbe und außerdem NUR *noch eine* Relation, welche zwischen unendlich vielen dieser Dinge bestehe und zwar so, daß sie nicht zwischen jedem Ding und jedem anderen besteht, und daß sie ferners auch nie zwischen einer endlichen Anzahl von Dingen besteht. Es ist klar, daß das ax[iom] of Red[ucibility] in einer solchen Welt sicher *nicht* bestünde. Es ist mir aber auch klar, daß es nicht die Sache der Logik ist darüber zu entscheiden, ob die Welt worin wir leben nun wirklich so ist, oder nicht. Was aber Tautologien eigentlich sind, das kann ich selber noch nicht ganz klar sagen, will aber trachten es ungefähr zu erklären. Es ist das eigentümliche (und *höchst* wichtige) Merkmal der *nicht*-logischen Sätze, daß man ihre Wahrheit *nicht* am Satzzeichen selbst erkennen kann. Wenn ich z.B. sage „Meier ist dumm”, so kannst Du dadurch, daß Du diesen Satz anschaust, nicht sagen ob er wahr oder falsch ist. Die Sätze der Logik aber – und sie allein – haben die Eigenschaft, daß sich ihre Wahrheit bezw. Falschheit schon in ihrem Zeichen ausdrückt. Es ist mir noch nicht gelungen, für die Identität eine Bezeichnung zu finden, die dieser Bedingung genügt; aber *ich zweifle* NICHT, daß sich eine solche Bezeichnungsweise finden lassen muß. Für zusammengesetzte Sätze



(elem[entary] prop[ositions]) genügt die ab-Bezeichnungsw[eise]. Es ist mir unangenehm, daß Du die Zeichenregel aus meinem letzten Brief nicht verstanden hast, denn es langweilt mich – UNSAGBAR sie zu erklären!! Du könntest sie auch durch ein bißchen Nachdenken selber finden!

Dies [see previous page] ist das Zeichen für $p \equiv p$; es ist tautologisch weil *b* nur mit solchen Pol-paaren verbunden ist, welche aus den entgegengesetzten Polen eines Satzes (nämlich p) bestehen; wenn Du dies auf Sätze anwendest, die mehr als 2 Argumente haben so erhältst Du die allgemeine Regel, wonach Tautologien gebildet werden. Ich bitte Dich denke selbst über die Sachen nach, es ist mir SCHRECKLICH eine schriftliche Erklärung zu wiederholen, die ich schon zum ersten Mal mit dem aller*größten Widerstreben* gegeben habe. Die Identität ist mir – wie gesagt – noch gar nicht klar. Also hierüber ein andermal! Wenn Dein Ax[iom] of Red[ucibility] fällt, so wird wahrscheinlich manches geändert werden müssen. Warum gebrauchst Du als Definition der Klassen nicht diese:

$$F[\hat{x}\ \varphi(x)].\ =\ :\varphi z \equiv_z \psi z.\ \supset_\psi .\ F(\psi) \quad \text{Def?}$$

– Zu Weihnachten werde ich LEIDER nach Wien fahren müssen.

Meine Mutter nämlich wünscht es sich so sehr, daß sie schwer gekränkt wäre, wenn ich nicht käme; und sie hat vom vorigen Jahr gerade an diese Zeit so böse Erinnerungen, daß ich es nicht über's Herz bringen kann wegzubleiben. Ich werde aber sehr bald wieder hierher zurückkehren. Meine Stimmung ist mittelmäßig, weil meine Arbeit nicht rasch vorwärts geht und weil mir der Gedanke an meine Heimfahrt entsetzlich ist. Die Einsamkeit hier tut mir unendlich wohl und ich glaube, daß ich das Leben unter Menschen jetzt nicht vertrüge. In mir gärt alles! Die große Frage ist jetzt: Wie muß ein Zeichensystem beschaffen sein, damit es jede Tautologie AUF EINE UND DIESELBE WEISE als Tautologie erkennen läßt? Dies ist das Grundproblem der Logik! – Ich bin überzeugt, ich werde in meinem Leben nie etwas veröffentlichen. Aber nach meinem Tod mußt Du den Band meines Tagebuchs, worin die ganze Geschichte steht, drucken lassen. *Schreib bald hierher* und versuche aus meinen verwirrten Erklärungen klar zu werden.

Immer Dein
L.W.

P.S. Deine Briefe sind mir eine große Wohltat; laß es Dich nicht reuen, mir so oft zu schreiben. Ich will nur noch sagen, daß Deine Theorie der "Descriptions" *ganz* ZWEIFELLOS richtig ist, selbst wenn die einzelnen Urzeichen darin ganz andere sind als Du glaubtest.

– Ich glaube oft daß ich verrückt werde.

(elem[entary] prop[ositions]) – See notes to **28**.

böse Erinnerungen / bad memories – Refers to the illness and death of Wittgenstein's father in January 1913. See **8–12**.

Band meines Tagebuchs / volume of my journal – This is probably the manuscript, or part of the manuscript, which Wittgenstein in a later letter (**42**) says that he showed to Moore, when Moore visited him in

Norway in April 1914. It was in all likelihood a notebook of the same character as those which he wrote during the war years, three of which have been preserved and published. See "Some Pre-Tractatus Manuscripts", in McGuinness, *Approaches*, pp. 260–2, where I attempt to identify it. It was probably sent to David Pinsent's family after the war and lost *en route* or later.

English Translation

Dear Russell,

Many thanks for your kind letter. I want to repeat again, in a different form, what I wrote about logic in my last letter. All the propositions of logic are generalizations of tautologies and all generalizations of tautologies are propositions of logic. There are no other logical propositions. (I regard this as definitive.) A proposition such as "$(\exists x) . x = x$", for example, is really a proposition of *physics*. The proposition

$$\text{“}(x) : x = x . \supset . (\exists y) . y = y\text{”}$$

is a proposition of logic and it is then for *physics* to say *whether any thing exists*. The same holds for the axiom of infinity: whether there exist $\aleph_0$ things is a matter for experience to determine (and one which experience cannot decide). But now, as to your Axiom of Reducibility: imagine we lived in a world in which nothing existed except $\aleph_0$ *things* and, over and above them, ONLY a *single* relation holding between infinitely many of the things and in such a way that it did not hold between each thing and every other thing and further never held between a finite number of things. It is clear that the axiom of reducibility would certainly *not* hold good in such a world. But it is also clear to me that whether or not the world in which we live is really of this kind is not a matter for logic to decide. As to what tautologies really are, however, I myself am not yet able to say quite clearly but I will try to give a rough explanation. It is the peculiar (and *most* important) mark of *non*-logical propositions that one is *not* able to recognize their truth from the propositional sign alone. If I say, for example, 'Meier is stupid', you cannot tell by looking at this proposition whether it is true or false. But the propositions of logic – and only they – have the property that their truth or falsity, as the case may be, finds its expression in the very sign for the proposition. I have not yet succeeded in finding a notation for identity that satisfies this condition; but *I have* NO *doubt* that it must be possible to find such a notation. For compound propositions ("elementary propositions") the ab-notation is sufficient. It distresses me that you did not understand the rule dealing with signs in my last letter because it bores me BEYOND WORDS to explain it. If you thought about it for a bit you could discover it for yourself!

The diagram [see the German text on previous pages] is the sign for $p \equiv p$; it is tautological because *b* is connected only with those pairs of poles that consist of opposite poles of a single proposition (namely p). Apply this to propositions with more than two arguments and you will obtain the general rule for the construction of tautologies. I beg you to think about these matters for yourself: it is INTOLERABLE for me, to repeat a written explanation which even the first time I gave only with the *utmost repugnance*. I find identity, as I say, still far from clear. So I will deal with that

another time. If your axiom of reducibility fails, then probably a lot of things will have to be changed. Why do not you use the following as the definition of a class

$$F[\hat{x}\ \varphi(x)]\ .=:\varphi z \equiv {}_{z}\psi z\ .\ \supset_{\psi}\ .\ F(\psi) \quad \text{Def?}$$

– At Christmas I must UNFORTUNATELY go to Vienna.

The fact is, my mother very much wants me to, so much so that she would be grievously offended if I did not come; and she has such bad memories of just this time last year that I have not the heart to stay away. But I shall return here very early. I am in mediocre spirits because my work is not progressing rapidly and because the thought of going back home appals me. Being alone here does me no end of good and I do not think I could now bear life among people. Inside me, everything is in a state of ferment. The big question now is, how must a system of signs be constituted in order to make every tautology recognizable as such IN ONE AND THE SAME WAY? This is the fundamental problem of logic! – I am convinced I shall never publish anything in my lifetime. But after my death you must see to the printing of the volume of my journal with the whole story in it. *Write here soon* and try to understand my muddled explanations.

Yours ever,
L.W.

P.S. Your letters are a great boon to me. Do not feel sorry for writing to me so often. I only want to add that your "Theory of Descriptions" is *quite* CERTAINLY correct, even though the individual primitive signs in it are not at all the ones you thought.

– I often think I am going mad.

31. To G. E. Moore, [December 1913]

Dear Moore,

Many thanks for your letter. I am glad that you will have regular discussions with me when you come up and *I can't see for my life* why you shouldn't be able to! That Johnson at last gives a paper to the Club interests me enormously! What was it like?? And what was it *really* about? To say the truth I don't like the title. However – Identity still plays hell with me. We had already heavy snowfalls but it isn't cold. Write soon and a lot about Johnson's paper.

Yours etc.
Ludwig Wittgenstein

Is Muscio still alive? And, if so, what's he doing?

Postcard of Skjolden.

Johnson at last gives a paper to the Club – The minutes of the Moral Science Club for 5 December 1913 show that "the President" (i.e. Johnson) read a paper entitled "Possibility". Roughly, for there was evidently some dispute over the minutes, his idea was that a strict definition could be given of possibility relative to a given set of propositions and that counter-factual possibility (as it came to be called) was relative to the Laws of Nature (which were not mere universals). The minutes also show that Moore was in the chair. Moore himself in his diary records, "can't say much, walk home with R[ussell]". Russell also comments on the occasion of this talk (a rare one as Wittgenstein's remark implies) in a letter to Lady Ottoline of 6 December 1913, saying "W. E. Johnson is a terrible example of waste. He has a *very* fine intellect and all the makings of a great philosopher except vitality." To be sure, Johnson's health was not good and he was much oppressed by teaching. The completion and publication of his *Logic* (see notes on **15** above) is known to have owed much to the assistance and energy of pupils and of Miss Naomi Bentwich in particular. Letter **15** itself is some evidence of Wittgenstein's efforts in the same direction.

Muscio – Bernard Muscio (1887–1928), University Demonstrator in Experimental Psychology at Cambridge, later Professor of Philosophy, University of Sydney. He had collaborated with Wittgenstein in psychological experiments in 1912–13 (see McGuinness, *Young Ludwig*, pp. 125ff). As is clear from **39**, Muscio must have failed Wittgenstein in some minor obligation, perhaps connected with these.

32. To B. Russell, 15.12.1913

Skjolden, Sogn
15.12.13.

Lieber Russell!

Ich schicke heute 720 Kroner an Messrs Child & Co. für Deine Rechnung. Die Frage nach dem Wesen der Identität läßt sich nicht beantworten, ehe das Wesen der Tautologie erklärt ist. Die Frage nach diesem aber, ist die Grundfrage *aller* Logik. – Mein Tag vergeht zwischen Logik, Pfeifen, Spazierengehen und Niedergeschlagensein. Ich wollte zu Gott, ich hätte mehr Verstand und es würde mir nun endlich alles klar; oder ich müßte nicht mehr lange leben! –

Du hast die Eroika gehört! Was hast Du zu dem zweiten Satz gesagt? ist er nicht unglaublich? –

Ist es nicht höchst merkwürdig, was für eine große und unendlich eigenartige Wissenschaft die Logik ist; ich glaube, weder Du noch ich haben das vor 1 1/2 Jahren gewußt.

Immer Dien
L.W.

English Translation

Dear Russell,

I am sending Messrs Child & Co. 720 Kroner today for credit to your account. The question as to the nature of identity cannot be answered until the nature of tautology has been explained. But that question is fundamental to the *whole* of logic. – My day passes between logic, whistling, going for walks, and being depressed. I wish to God that I were more intelligent and everything would finally become clear to me – or else that I needn't live much longer! –

You heard the Eroica! What did you think of the second movement? Isn't it incredible? –

It's extraordinary, isn't it, what a huge and infinitely strange science logic is? Neither you nor I knew that, I think, a year and a half ago.

Yours ever
L.W.

33. To B. Russell, [Christmas 1913]

IV. Alleegasse 16

Lieber Russell!

Vielen Dank für Deinen Brief! Ich bin wie Du siehst zu Hause, und LEIDER wieder einmal ganz unfruchtbar. Ich hoffe nur die Ideen werden wiederkommen, wenn ich in meine Einsamkeit zurückkehre. (Ich bleibe noch etwa 8–10 Tage hier.) Was Deine amerikanischen Vorlesungen anbelangt, so brauchtest Du mich – von *mir* aus – natürlich gar nicht zu nennen; aber – wie Du willst –. Hier geht es mir jeden Tag anders: Einmal glaube ich, ich werde verrückt, so stark gärt alles in mir; den nächsten Tag bin ich wieder ganz und gar phlegmatisch. Am Grunde meiner Seele aber kocht es fort und fort wie am Grunde eines Geisirs. Und ich hoffe immer noch es werde endlich einmal ein endgültiger Ausbruch erfolgen, und ich kann ein anderer Mensch werden. Über Logik kann ich Dir heute nichts schreiben. Vielleicht glaubst Du daß es Zeitverschwendung ist über mich selbst zu denken; aber wie kann ich Logiker sein, wenn ich noch nicht Mensch bin! *Vor allem* muß ich mit mir selbst in's Reine kommen!

Immer Dein

L.W.

This letter, undated by its writer, was assigned to "Spring 1914" by Russell, but that dating seems improbable since no visit to Vienna at Easter is known of and Moore's visit to Norway (29 March to 4 April) and Wittgenstein's remarks in **42** about the progress of his work almost exclude one. Summer 1914 seems ruled out by the town address (compare **43** written from Neuwaldegg on the outskirts of Vienna) nor did Wittgenstein then mean to go back immediately from Austria to Norway, as we know from plans made with both David Pinsent and W. Eccles (engineer, a friend of Wittgenstein's from his days in the University of Manchester; Wittgenstein's letters to him are included in *Schriften*, vol. 4: *Briefe, Briefwechsel mit B. Russell, etc.*, ed. B. McGuinness and G. H. von Wright (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1980)). I conclude that it must have been written around Christmas 1913 and it does indeed seem to be echoed in **34** below.

Deine amerikanischen Vorlesungen / your American lecture-course – Russell was due to give the Lowell Lectures at Harvard University in March and April 1914. He composed them between September and late November 1913, as is clear from his correspondence with Lady Ottoline Morrell. (The account, in his autobiography, that he began dictating them, from scratch, on 1 January 1914 must be the result of some confusion. The issue is discussed by K. Blackwell in *Russell* 12 (1973), 11–13.) They were published in 1914 as *Our Knowledge of the External World* (in America the spine but not the title-page bore the title *Scientific Method in Philosophy*, which, prefixed by "On", was the subtitle of the English edition). In the preface to these (and also in the notes to Lecture VII, 1st edn p. 208, later edns p. 213) there is an acknowledgement of the importance of Wittgenstein's work. No doubt Russell had announced this acknowledgement in a letter.

English Translation

Dear Russell,

Many thanks for your letter. As you see, I am at home and UNFORTUNATELY once again quite unproductive. I only hope the ideas will start to flow again when I go back into isolation. (I am staying here for about another eight or ten days.) As regards your American lecture-course, there was naturally no need at all, as far as *I*'m

concerned, to mention my name. But – as you wish –. Here I feel different every day. Sometimes things inside me are in such a ferment that I think I'm going mad: then the next day I am totally apathetic again. But deep inside me there's a perpetual seething, like the bottom of a geyser, and I keep on hoping that things will come to an eruption once and for all, so that I can turn into a different person. I can't write you anything about logic today. Perhaps you regard this thinking about myself as a waste of time – but how can I be a logician before I'm a human being! *Far* the most important thing is to come to terms with myself!

Yours ever
L.W.

1914

34. To B. Russell, [January 1914]

Skjolden

Lieber Russell!

Vielen Dank für Deinen lieben Brief! LEIDER kann ich Dir auch diesmal wieder keine logischen Neuigkeiten berichten: denn es ist mir in den letzten Wochen fürchterlich schlecht gegangen. (Eine Folge meiner Wiener „Ferien".) Ich war jeden Tag abwechselnd von schrecklicher Angst und Depression gequält und selbst wenn diese aussetzten so erschöpft, daß ich an ein Arbeiten gar nicht denken konnte. Die Möglichkeiten der geistigen Qual sind unsagbar entsetzlich! Erst seit zwei Tagen kann ich wieder die Stimme der Vernunft durch den Lärm der Gespenster hören und habe wieder angefangen zu arbeiten. Und *vielleicht* werde ich jetzt genesen und etwas anständiges hervorbringen können. Aber ich habe *nie* gewußt, was es heißt, sich nur noch einen Schritt vom Wahnsinn zu fühlen. – Hoffen wir das Beste! –

Ja, Mörike ist freilich ein *großer* Dichter und seine Gedichte gehören zum besten was wir haben. Aber ich bin neugierig, ob Du ihn wirklich genießen wirst, weil Du doch Goethe nicht genießest. Und Mörikes Schönheit ist ganz nahe verwandt mit Goethes. Aber *wenn* Du Mörike *wirklich* genoßen hast, dann versuch' einmal die Iphigenie von Goethe: vielleicht geht Dir dann ein Licht auf. –

Jetzt noch eine Frage: Sagt der „Satz vom zureichenden Grunde" (Law of causality) nicht einfach, daß Raum und Zeit relativ sind? Dies scheint mir jetzt ganz klar zu sein; denn alle die Ereignisse von denen dieser Satz behaupten soll, daß sie nicht eintreten können, könnten überhaupt nur in einer absoluten Zeit und einem absoluten Raum eintreten. (Dies wäre freilich noch kein unbedingter Grund zu meiner Behauptung.) Aber denke an den Fall des Massenteilchens, das, allein in der Welt existierend, und seit aller Ewigkeit in Ruhe, plötzlich im Zeitpunkt A anfängt sich zu bewegen; und denke an ähnliche Fälle, so wirst Du – glaube ich – sehen daß KEINE Einsicht a priori uns solche Ereignisse als unmöglich erscheinen läßt, *außer eben in dem Fall* daß Raum und Zeit relativ sind. Bitte schreibe mir Deine Meinung in diesem Punkte.

Ich wünsche Dir alles Beste zu Deinen Vorlesungen in Amerika. Vielleicht geben sie Dir doch Gelegenheit mehr als sonst Deine *Gedanken* und nicht *nur* fertig formulierte Resultate auszusprechen. Und DAS gerade wäre von dem denkbar größten Wert für Deine Hörer, wenn sie den Wert des *Gedankens*, nicht den des fertigen Resultats, kennen lernten. Schreib' mir bald und denk' an mich, wenn Du im Mörike liesest.

Immer Dein

L.W.

P.S. Noch eine Bitte! Ich schicke Dir beiliegend meine College-Rechnung und einen Check für 80 Kroner; ich bitte Dich hiervon die Rechnung zu zahlen, da ich nicht weiß, ob Barclay & Co. Norwegisches Geld annimmt.

I[mmer] D[ein]

L.W.

Mörike – In a letter to Lady Ottoline, dated from Rome, 30 December 1913 (on holiday), Russell recounts how a Frau Liese von Hattenberg (her true name, though he says "Hattingberg") "read poems by a man named Mörike whom Wittgenstein has always raved about – he even left a volume of him in my rooms, hoping I should read him, but I never did. However I liked the poems she read." For further details see Ronald Clark, *Life of Bertrand Russell* (London: Cape and Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1975), pp. 211, 219–22. Wittgenstein had a copy of Mörike sent to him at the Front as an "antidote" to modern poetry (P. Engelmann, *Letters from L. Wittgenstein with a Memoir*, ed. B. McGuinness (Oxford: Blackwell, 1967), pp. 5–6; see also pp. 84ff. for his admiration of "Mozart on the journey to Prague"). He also used Mörike in his elementary school teaching in the 1920s. Mörike has been well described as "a niche in which the popular and homely encounter the subtle and refined", in which respect he resembles J. P. Hebel and G. Keller, also often recommended to friends by Wittgenstein.

Vorlesungen in Amerika / lecture-course in America – Here the reference is probably not so much to the Lowell Lectures (see note to **33**) but to either or both of the courses, on Theory of Knowledge and Advanced Logic, which Russell was to give in the Department of Philosophy of Harvard University in the same period and which he was now engaged in preparing. One at least of these courses was attended by T. S. Eliot, whose notes contain the earliest exposition of the method of truth-tables (apart from Wittgenstein's own in Russell's papers). See John Shosky, "Russell's Use of Truth Tables", *Russell*, n.s. 17 (1997), 11–26. Eliot's notes suggest that the course was indeed exploratory rather than didactic.

English Translation

Dear Russell,

Many thanks for your kind letter. It's VERY sad but I've once again no logical news for you. The reason is that things have gone terribly badly for me in the last weeks. (A result of my "holidays" in Vienna.) Every day I was tormented by a frightful *Angst* and by depression in turns and even in the intervals I was so exhausted that I wasn't able to think of doing a bit of work. It's terrifying beyond all description the kinds of mental torment that there can be! It wasn't until two days ago that I could hear the voice of reason over the howls of the damned and I began to work again. And *perhaps* I'll get better now and be able to produce something decent. But I *never* knew what it meant to feel only *one* step away from madness. – Let's hope for the best! –

Yes: Mörike really is a *great* poet and his poems are among the best things we have. But I am curious to know whether you will really enjoy him. After all, you don't enjoy Goethe and the beauty of Mörike's work is very closely related to that of Goethe's. But *if* you have *really* enjoyed Mörike, then just try Goethe's Iphigenie. Then perhaps you'll see the light.

Now for a question: isn't what the "principle of sufficient reason" (law of causality) says simply that space and time are relative? I now think this is quite obvious, because all the events which, according to this assertion, are not meant to be possible could only occur, if at all, in an absolute time and space. (Admittedly this wouldn't in itself be an adequate reason for my assertion.) But think of the case of a particle that is the only thing existing in the world and that has been at rest for all eternity and that suddenly, at time A, begins to move. Think of this and similar cases and you will see, I believe, that it is NOT an a priori insight that makes such events seem impossible to us *unless it is the case* that space and time are relative. Please write and tell me your opinion on this point.

All best wishes for your lecture-course in America! Perhaps it will give you at any rate a more favourable opportunity than usual to tell them your *thoughts* and not *just* cut and dried results. THAT is what would be of the greatest imaginable value for your audience – to get to know the value of *thought* and not that of a cut and dried result. Write to me soon and think of me when you read Mörike.

Yours ever
L.W.

P.S. Another request! I enclose my College bill and a cheque for 80 Kroner. Please pay the bill out of this, because I don't know whether Barclay & Co. will accept Norwegian money.

Yours ever
L.W.

35. To G. E. Moore, [30.1.1914]

About 2 months ago I wrote to you asking you to write to me about Johnson's lecture, and I haven't got an answer yet. Isn't that a shame? Also I should like to know how you are and when the Easter vac's begin. Have you ever thought about the nature of a tautology? That's what I am now bothered with.

Now do write to me soon and much!

Yours, etc., etc.
Ludwig Wittgenstein

P.S. I am now learning to ski and find it great fun.

Johnson's lecture – See **31** above and **37.**

36. To B. Russell, [February 1914]

[Skjolden, Sogn, Norway]

Lieber Russell!

Ich danke Dir für Deinen freundlichen Brief. Es war sehr schön von Dir, daß Du mir auf diese Weise geantwortet hast! Deine Forderung aber, ich solle so tun als sei nichts vorgefallen, kann ich Dir unmöglich erfüllen, da dies ganz gegen meine Natur ginge. VERZEIH *mir daher diesen langen Brief* und bedenke daß ich meiner Natur ebenso folgen *muß*, wie Du der Deinen. Ich habe in der letzten Woche viel über unser Verhältnis nachgedacht und bin zu dem Schluß gekommen, daß wir eigentlich nicht zu einander passen. DIES MEINE ICH NICHT ALS TADEL! weder für Dich noch für mich. Aber es ist eine Tatsache. Wir hatten ja schon so oft ungemütliche Gespräche mit einander, wenn wir auf gewisse Themen kamen. Und die Ungemütlichkeit war nicht eine Folge von schlechter Laune auf seiten eines von uns beiden, sondern sie war die Folge enormer Unterschiede in unserem Wesen. Ich bitte Dich inständigst nicht zu glauben, ich wolle Dich irgendwie tadeln, oder Dir eine Predigt halten; sondern ich will nur unser Verhältnis klarlegen *weil ich daraus einen Schluß ziehen werde*. – Auch unser letzter Streit war bestimmt nicht bloß die Folge Deiner Empfindlichkeit oder meiner Rücksichtslosigkeit, sondern der tiefere Grund lag darin, daß Dir jener Brief von mir zeigen mußte, wie grundverschieden unsere Auffassungen z.B. des Wertes eines wissenschaftlichen Werkes sind. Es war natürlich dumm von mir, Dir damals so lang über jene Sache geschrieben zu haben, denn ich hätte mir ja sagen müßen, daß sich solche wesentliche Unterschiede nicht durch einen Brief ausgleichen lassen. Und dies ist ja nur EIN Fall unter *vielen*. Ich sehe jetzt, wo ich dies in aller Ruhe schreibe, vollkommen ein, daß Deine Werturteile ebenso gut sind und ebenso tief in Dir begründet sind wie meine in mir, und daß ich kein Recht habe Dich zu katechisieren; aber ebenso klar sehe ich jetzt, daß wir eben darum kein rechtes Freundschaftsverhältnis zu einander haben können. *Ich werde Dir so lange ich lebe vom* GANZEM HERZEN *dankbar und zugetan sein, aber ich werde Dir nicht mehr schreiben und Du wirst mich auch nicht mehr sehen*. Jetzt wo ich mich mit Dir wieder versöhnt habe, will ich *in Frieden* von Dir scheiden, damit wir nicht irgend einmal wieder gegen einander gereizt werden und dann vielleicht in Feindschaft auseinander gehen. Ich wünsche Dir alles Beste und bitte Dich mich nicht zu vergessen und oft *freundlich* an mich zu denken. Leb wohl!

Immer Dein
Ludwig Wittgenstein

In this letter, and in **38**, there is reference to a quarrel (*Streit*) between Russell and Wittgenstein. Russell refers to the matter in a letter to Lady Ottoline Morrell, dated 19 February 1914, as follows: "Since I began writing this, I have had a letter from Wittgenstein saying he and I are so dissimilar that it is useless to attempt friendship, and he will never write to me or see me again. I dare say his mood will change after a while. I find I don't care on his account, but only for the sake of Logic. And yet I believe I do really care too much to look at it. It is my fault – I have been too sharp with him." On 23 February he wrote, "I wrote to Wittgenstein and I hope he relents." Probably the present letter is that received by Russell on 19 February. Perhaps a letter of Wittgenstein's between **34** and **36** has been lost, since two intermediate letters from Russell (one sharp and one emollient) seem to be implied. Russell's letters to Lady Ottoline in

this period alternately describe the stimulus of Wittgenstein and the fatigue of his company, the folly of his going to Norway and the relief it provided, the supreme value of his work for the future of logic and the difficulty that his criticisms created for Russell's own work. There was material for a quarrel here: the occasion may have been a sharp reaction of Russell's to Wittgenstein's well-meant advice in **34**.

English Translation

Dear Russell,

Thank you for your friendly letter. It was very good of you to answer me in such a way. But I can't possibly carry out your request to behave as if nothing had happened: that would go clean contrary to my nature. So FORGIVE *me for this long letter* and remember that I have to follow my nature just as much as you. During the last week I have thought a lot about our relationship and I have come to the conclusion that we really don't suit one another. THIS IS NOT MEANT AS A REPROACH! either for you or for me. But it is a fact. We've often had uncomfortable conversations with one another when certain subjects came up. And the uncomfortableness was not a consequence of ill humour on one side or the other but of enormous differences in our natures. I beg you most earnestly not to think I want to reproach you in any way or to preach you a sermon. I only want to put our relationship in clear terms *in order to draw a conclusion*. – Our latest quarrel, too, was certainly not simply a result of your sensitiveness or my inconsiderateness. It came from deeper – from the fact that my letter must have shown you how totally different our ideas are, E.G. of the value of a scientific work. It was, of course, stupid of me to have written to you at such length about this matter: I ought to have told myself that such fundamental differences cannot be resolved by a letter. And this is just ONE instance out of *many*. Now, as I'm writing this in complete calm, I can see perfectly well that your value-judgments are just as good and just as deep-seated in you as mine in me, and that I have no right to catechize you. But I see equally clearly, now, that for that very reason there cannot be any real relation of friendship between us. *I shall be grateful to you and devoted to you* WITH ALL MY HEART *for the whole of my life, but I shall not write to you again and you will not see me again either*. Now that I am once again reconciled with you I want to part from you *in peace* so that we shan't sometime get annoyed with one another again and then perhaps part as enemies. I wish you everything of the best and I beg you not to forget me and to think of me often *with friendly feelings*. Goodbye!

Yours *ever*

Ludwig Wittgenstein

37. To G. E. Moore, 18.2.1914

Skjolden
18.2.14.

Dear Moore,

Thanks so much for your letter. I'm sorry I caused you horrid troubles. I didn't really expect such a long account of the meeting. But all you wrote to me interested me enormously because I think I know exactly what Johnson was at. It – of course – all turns on the question as to the nature of deduction. And – I think – the clue to it all lies in the fact that $\varphi x \supset_x \psi x$ only then expresses the deductive relation when this prop[osition] is the generalization of a tautology.

You must come as soon as Term ends and I shall meet you in Bergen. I am looking forward to your coming more than I can say! I am bothered to death with Logik and other things. But I hope I shan't die before you come for in that case we couldn't discuss *much*.

Yours, etc.
L.W.

P.S. Boats run from Newcastle to Bergen 3 times a week. I shall expect you in Bergen about the 20th of March. What has happened with young Sedgwick whom Hardy [tried] to run? Has he become a member of the Society?

the meeting – That referred to in **31** and **35** above.

Logik – Either the discipline of logic or the work referred to in **40** and **41** below. Russell's letter to Lady Ottoline quoted in the notes on **36** may also be taken to indicate (note the capital letter for "Logic") that Wittgenstein was writing a work with this as title.

Sedgwick – Presumably R. R. Sedgwick (1894–1972), historian and public servant, who was at the time an undergraduate at, and later a Fellow of, Trinity.

Hardy – See note on **28**.

the Society – The semi-secret, ancient discussion club at Cambridge also known as "The Apostles". Russell, Moore, and Keynes were members of the Society. Russell had in 1912 proposed Wittgenstein for membership. For an account of the activities of the Society in the years before the First World War see Russell's *Autobiography*, vol. I, pp. 68–70 and *passim*, also Paul Levy, *Moore* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1979), *passim*, from which it appears (p. 311) that Sedgwick was not elected. For Wittgenstein's own connexions with the Society see *Young Ludwig*, pp. 146–51.

38. To B. Russell, 3.3.1914

Skjolden
3.3.14.

Lieber Russell!

Dein Brief war so voll von Güte und Freundschaft, daß ich nicht glaube, auf ihn schweigen zu *dürfen*. Ich muß also mein Vorhaben brechen: was ich Dir aber sagen muß, kann ich leider nicht kurz fassen und ich habe kaum irgendwelche Hoffnung, daß Du mich wirklich verstehen wirst. Vor allem muß ich nocheinmal sagen: Unsere Streitigkeiten kommen nicht *nur* aus äußerlichen Gründen (Nervosität, Übermüdung u. dgl.) sondern sind – jedenfalls in *mir* – *sehr* tief begründet. Du magst darin recht haben, daß *wir selbst* vielleicht nicht einmal *so sehr* verschieden sind: aber *unsere Ideale* sind es ganz und gar. Und darum konnten und können wir nie über Dinge, worin unsere Werturteile in Betracht kamen, mit einander reden, ohne zu heucheln, oder zu zanken. *Ich glaube dies läßt sich nicht leugnen* und war mir schon seit langer Zeit aufgefallen; und war mir schrecklich, denn unser Verkehr bekam dadurch etwas vom Beisammensitzen in einem Sumpfe. Denn wir beide haben Schwächen, besonders aber *ich* und mein Leben ist VOLL von den häßlichsten und kleinlichsten Gedanken und Taten (dies ist *keine* Übertreibung). Wenn aber ein Verkehr nicht beide Teile herabziehen soll, dann dürfen die *Schwächen* der beiden *nicht* mit einander verkehren. Sondern zwei Leute sollen nur dort mit einander verkehren, wo sie beide *rein* sind; d.i. dort wo sie gegen einander *ganz* offen sein können, ohne einander zu verletzen. Und *das* können wir beide NUR, wenn wir unseren Verkehr auf die Mitteilung objectiv feststellbarer Tatsachen beschränken und etwa noch auf die Mitteilung unserer freundschaftlichen Gefühle. Alle anderen Themen aber führen bei uns zur Heuchelei oder zum Zank. Du sagst vielleicht: es ist ja bisher so ziemlich gegangen, warum sollte es nicht so weitergehen. Aber ich bin des ewigen schmutzigen und halben ZU müde! Mein Leben war bisher *eine* große Schweinerei – aber soll es immer so weitergehen? – Ich schlage Dir nun dies vor: Machen wir einander Mitteilungen über unsere Arbeiten, unser Befinden und dergleichen, aber unterlassen wir gegen einander jedwedes Werturteil – worüber immer –, in dem vollen Bewußtsein, daß wir hierin gegen einander nicht *ganz* ehrlich sein könnten, ohne den anderen zu verletzen (zum mindesten gilt dies bestimmt von *mir*). Meiner tiefen Zuneigung brauche ich Dich nicht erst zu versichern, *aber sie wäre in großer Gefahr, wenn wir mit einem Verkehr fortführen, der Heuchelei zur Grundlage hat und deshalb für uns beide beschämend ist.* Aber ich glaube, es wäre ehrenvoll für uns beide, wenn wir ihn auf einer reineren Grundlage fortsetzten. – Ich bitte Dich, Dir dies alles zu überlegen, mir aber *nur dann* zu antworten, wenn Du es im Guten tun kannst. In jedem Fall sei meiner Liebe und Treue versichert. Möchtest Du diesen Brief so verstehen wie er gemeint ist!

Immer Dein
L.W.

English Translation

Dear Russell,

Your letter was *so* full of kindness and friendship that I don't think I have the *right* to leave it unanswered. So I have to break my resolution. Unfortunately, however, I can't put what I have to say to you in a few words and I have scarcely any hope that you'll really understand me. The chief thing, I must tell you again, is that our quarrels don't arise *just* from external reasons such as nervousness or over-tiredness but are – at any rate on *my* side – *very* deep-rooted. You may be right in saying that *we ourselves* are not *so very* different, but *our ideals* could not be more so. And that's why we haven't been able and we shan't *ever* be able to talk about anything involving our value-judgements without either becoming hypocritical or falling out. *I think this is incontestable*; I had noticed it a long time ago; and it was frightful for me, because it tainted our relations with one another: we seemed to be sitting side by side in a marsh. The fact is, we both of us have weaknesses, but especially *I* have, and my life is FULL of the ugliest and pettiest thoughts and actions imaginable (this is *not* an exaggeration). But if a relationship is not to be degrading for both sides then it should *not* be a relationship between the weaknesses on either side. No: a relationship should be confined to areas where both people involved have clean hands, i.e. where each can be completely frank without hurting the other. And that's something *we* can do ONLY by restricting our relationship to the communication of facts capable of being established objectively, with perhaps also some mention of our friendly feelings for one another. But any other subject will lead, in our case, to hypocrisy or to falling out. Now perhaps, you'll say, "Things have more or less worked, up to the present. Why not go on in the same way?" But I'm TOO tired of this constant sordid compromise. My life has been one nasty mess so far – but need that go on indefinitely? – Now, I'll make a proposal to you. Let's write to each other about our work, our health, and the like, but let's avoid in our communications any kind of value-judgment, on any subject whatsoever, and let's recognize clearly that in such judgments neither of us could be *completely* honest without hurting the other (this is certainly true in *my* case, at any rate). I don't need to assure you of my deep affection for you, *but that affection would be in great danger if we were to continue with a relationship based on hypocrisy and for that reason a source of shame to us both*. No, I think the honourable thing for both of us would be if we continued it on a more genuine basis. – I beg you to think this over and to send me an answer *only when* you can do it in a good spirit. Feel assured in any case of my love and loyalty. I only hope you may understand this letter as it is meant to be understood.

Yours ever

L.W.

39. To G. E. Moore, 5.3.1914

Skjolden
5.3.14.

Dear Moore,

Only a few lines because I'm just now in the right mood. First of all: *write* soon when exactly you're going to come to Bergen. Secondly: *come* soon. Thirdly: I've got out LOTS of new logical stuff. (I don't dare to say more.) Fourthly: If you see Johnson please give him my kindest regards. Fifthly: if you see Muscio *please* tell him that he's a *beast* (he'll know why). Sixthly: once more – come soon. That's all.

Yours, etc., etc.
L.W.

in the right mood – For work, is meant.

40. To G. E. Moore, [March 1914]

Dear Moore,

Why on earth won't you do your paper here? You shall have a *sitting-room* with a splendid view ALL BY YOURSELF and I shall leave you alone as much as you like (*in fact the whole day, if necessary*). On the other hand we *could* see one another whenever both of us should like to. And we *could* even talk over your business (which *might* be fun). Or do you want so many books? You see – I've PLENTY to do myself, so I shan't disturb you a bit. *Do* take the Boat that leaves Newcastle on the 17th arriving in Bergen on the 19th and do your work here (I might even have a good influence upon it by preventing too many repetitions). I *think*, now, that Logic must be very nearly done if it is not already. – So, DO think over what I've said!!

Yours, etc., etc.
L.W.

P.S. Oh – *Do* buy the "Schicksalslied" by Brahms in an arrangement for 4 hands and bring it with you. And, please, send a telegram if you come on the 19th. I *hope* you will.

Logic – Evidently a piece of writing by Wittgenstein, perhaps already referred to in **37**. See note to **41** below.

41. To G. E. Moore, 7.5.1914

May 7, '14

Dear Moore,

Your letter annoyed me. *When I wrote Logik I didn't consult the Regulations*, and therefore I think it would only be fair if you gave me my degree without consulting them so much either! As to a Preface and Notes; I think my examiners will easily see how much I have cribbed from Bosanquet. – If I'm not worth your making an exception for me *even in some* STUPID *details* then I may as well go to Hell directly; and if I *am* worth it and you don't do it then – by God – *you* might go there.

The whole business is too stupid and too beastly to go on writing about it so –

L.W.

my degree – This letter seems to indicate that Wittgenstein meant to submit an essay entitled "Logic" (hardly "Logik") for the BA degree, which Research Students (as Advanced Students (see Introduction, p. 3) were now called) would normally be expected to take. According to the regulations for Advanced Students, such a dissertation was expected to contain a preface and notes in which the students had to state the sources on which he had relied and "the extent to which he had availed himself of the work of others". There is a diary entry by Moore which would indicate that Moore had shown the essay to W. M. Fletcher, Tutor at Trinity College (see **11**), and been told that it could not possibly pass for a dissertation. Thereupon he had written to Wittgenstein about this, provoking this angry and seemingly unjustified reaction. It is of some interest to note that Wittgenstein is referring to the writing under the German title "Logik". This may be taken as an indication that the dissertation was originally written in German, though Wittgenstein's spelling is not seldom erratic. The essay is unlikely to be identical with "Notes on Logic" (see **23** above), since Wittgenstein seems to have been working on it in February and March 1914 (see **37** and **40**). Presumably its original and German form was the manuscript shown to Moore in April (see **44**). The content of this is surely at least summarized in the so-called "Notes dictated to G. E. Moore in Norway" (published as Appendix II to *Notebooks 1914–1916*), which Moore himself entitled "Wittgenstein on Logic, April 1914". Much indeed speaks for the supposition that it was these notes that Moore showed to Fletcher and that Wittgenstein meant to submit. Fletcher's role is not entirely clear: perhaps Moore approached him for an impartial opinion from an outsider, for, in fact, Moore himself was Secretary of the Degrees Committee of the Special Board for Moral Science and, on the two occasions that year when applications were made, was one of the two referees. Both those applications were in the event rejected. All of these facts will have been known to Moore and enough of them to Wittgenstein: this perhaps explains the awkwardness of the situation. Something like it was to occur again in the small world of the Cambridge faculty (see **117**).

Bosanquet – Bernard Bosanquet (1848–1923, and hence an almost exact contemporary of Frege's) was an Hegelian philosopher. The second edition of his *Logic* appeared in 1911. The reference is no doubt intended ironically.

42. To B. Russell, [June 1914]

[Skjolden, Sogn, Norway]

Lieber Rusell!

Nur ein paar Zeilen um Dir zu sagen daß ich Deinen l[ieben] Brief erhalten habe und daß meine Arbeit in den letzten 4–5 Monaten große Fortschritte gemacht hat. Jetzt aber bin ich wieder in einem Zustand der Ermüdung und kann weder arbeiten noch meine Arbeit erklären. Ich habe sie aber Moore als er bei mir war *ausführlich* erklärt und er hat sich verschiedenes aufgeschrieben. Du wirst also alles am besten von ihm erfahren können. Es ist viel Neues. – Am besten wirst Du alles verstehen wenn Du Moores Aufzeichnungen selber liesest. Es wird jetzt wohl wieder einige Zeit dauern bis ich wieder etwas hervorbringe. Bis dahin,

Dein

L.W.

P.S. Ich baue mir jetzt hier ein kleines Haus in der Einsamkeit. Hoffentlich war Deine Reise erfolgreich.

Russell arrived back from the United States on 14 June. Wittgenstein may have known from Russell's letters to him when Russell was supposed to return to England. If this is so, then the use of the past tense in "Hoffentlich war Deine Reise erfolgreich" (I hope your journey was a success) would indicate that the letter was written in the middle or second half of June.

Moore's visit was from 29 March to 14 April. Wittgenstein seems to have returned to Austria from Norway about the turn of the months June–July. We know from **43** that he was in Vienna in the beginning of July. Later in July he was on the Hochreit and on the eve of the outbreak of the war again in Vienna (see McGuinness, *Young Ludwig*, p. 205).

Wittgenstein did not live in the hut he was building until after the war, in 1921, when he visited the place in the company of his friend Arvid Sjögren. Apart from shorter visits he lived there again for the greater part of the academic year 1936–7. (See **201** and **202**.) It was then that he started work on what was to become *Philosophical Investigations*. His last visit to Skjolden was towards the end of 1950 in the company of his friend, Dr Ben Richards.

English Translation

Dear Russell,

Just a few lines to tell you that I received your kind letter and that my work has made considerable progress in the last four or five months. But I have now relapsed into a state of exhaustion and can neither do any work nor explain what I did earlier. However I explained it *in detail* to Moore when he was with me and he made various notes. So you can best find it all out from him. Many things in it are new. – The best way to understand it all would be if you read Moore's notes for yourself. It will probably be some time now before I produce anything further. Till then –

Yours

L.W.

P.S. I am now building myself a small house here miles from anyone. I hope your journey was a success.

43. To G. E. Moore, 3.7.1914

Wien XVII
Neuwaldeggerstraße 38
July 3rd, '14

Dear Moore,

Upon clearing up some papers before leaving Skjolden I popped upon your letter which had made me so wild. And upon reading it over again I found that I had probably no sufficient reason to write to you as I did. (Not that I like your letter a bit *now*.) But at any rate my wrath has cooled down and I'd rather be friends with you again than otherwise. I consider I have strained myself enough now for I would *not* have written this to many people and if you don't answer this I shan't write to you again.

Yours, etc., etc.
L.W.

Neuwaldeggerstraße – the address of what might be called the mid-season house of the Wittgenstein family on the outskirts of Vienna. It was there that Wittgenstein was born and there, later in this month, that he met Ludwig von Ficker.

Moore had every reason to be offended by Wittgenstein's previous letter (**41**). He did not reply to **41** or to the present letter. In an autobiographical annotation Moore says that after the 'violent letter of abuse' (**41**) he had no contact with Wittgenstein until Wittgenstein's return to Cambridge in January 1929. Moore did however hear, indirectly, from Wittgenstein, since on 15 January 1915 (misdated 1914 by a common slip of the pen) Wittgenstein's friend David Pinsent wrote to him as follows:

> Dear Mr Moore,
>
> I have heard from Wittgenstein several times since the beginning of the War (he is serving in the Austrian Army) and in his last letter he asks me to send a message to you. He writes:
>
> > If you get to Cambridge next time please go and see Moore with whom I had a quarrel – give him my love and say that I'm sorry I offended him, in short make my peace with him. As it is unlikely that I shall be in Cambridge in the near future [This was perhaps the meaning of "next time". Ed.] I thought it would be best if I wrote to you instead . . . [The rest of the letter consists of directions for writing to Wittgenstein via the Red Cross, information which Moore doubtless already had from Russell. Ed.]

Moore continued to worry over the quarrel – his diaries show that he told Desmond McCarthy "all about Wittgenstein" the weekend after receiving Pinsent's letter – but made no outward response to this overture. From Pinsent's letters to Wittgenstein, printed in *A Portrait*, pp. 100f., it is obvious that Wittgenstein returned to the topic of his *amende honorable*. On 6 April 1915 Pinsent eventually said, "I am so sorry if Moore won't behave like a Christian: as a matter of fact he never acknowledged my letter."

44. To B. Russell, [Christmas 1914]

Lieber Russell!

Erst heute erhielt ich Deinen lieben Brief, den Du am 28. Juli an mich geschrieben hast. Daß Moore meine Ideen Dir nicht hat erklären können, ist mir unbegreiflich. Hast Du aus seinen Notizen irgend etwas entnehmen können?? Ich fürchte, Nein! Sollte ich in diesem Krieg umkommen, so wird Dir mein Manuskript, welches ich damals Moore zeigte, zugeschickt werden; nebst einem, welches ich jetzt während des Krieges geschrieben habe. Im Falle ich am Leben bleibe, so möchte ich nach dem Kriege nach England kommen und Dir meine Arbeit – wenn es Dir recht ist – mündlich erklären. Ich bin auch im ersten Fall davon überzeugt, daß sie früher oder später von jemandem verstanden werden wird! Besten Dank für die Zusendung Deiner Schrift über Sense-Data. Ich habe sie noch nicht gelesen. Möge der Himmel mir bald wieder gute Ideen schenken!!! –

Dein

Ludwig Wittgenstein

Bitte grüße Johnson herzlichst!
Meine Adresse ist:

Art[illerie] Autodetachement
„Oblt Gürth"
Feldpost No 186

Moore – Russell showed this letter to Moore (or read to him from it) on 20 January, according to Moore's diary. Moore comments, "Russell must have told him that I couldn't [explain his ideas] but he had no right to say this because he has never tried to get me to explain them." Subsequently, on 10 February, Russell did ask to see Moore's notes, for which see **42** above. This letter makes it plausible that there was no further document "Logik" in circulation in Cambridge, and hence that Moore's notes were indeed Wittgenstein's intended thesis.

Manuskript / Manuscript – Evidently the first of the 1914–16 *Notebooks*. On its flyleaf there are instructions that it is to be sent to Russell in the case of Wittgenstein's death. For that shown to Moore see again **41** above.

Schrift über Sense-Data / piece about Sense Data – This must be "The Relation of Sense-Data to Physics", *Scientia* (16 July 1914), repr. in *Mysticism and Logic and Other Essays* (London: Longmans Green, 1918).

Oblt – Oberleutnant. For Wittgenstein's military career during the First World War see the Editor's Appendix to P. Engelmann, *Letters from Ludwig Wittgenstein with a Memoir*, pp. 140–2, and McGuinness, *Young Ludwig*, pp. 211–68.

English Translation

Dear Russell,

It was only today that I got your kind letter which you wrote me on 28th July. I find it inconceivable that Moore wasn't able to explain my ideas to you. Were you able to get anything at all out of his notes? I'm afraid the answer is, No. If I should not survive the present war, the manuscript of mine that I showed to Moore at the time

will be sent to you, along with another one which I have written now, during the war. In the case that I am still alive, I should like to come to England after the war and explain my work to you orally, if you've no objection. Even in the former case, I'm convinced that it will be understood by somebody sooner or later. Thank you very much for sending your piece about sense-data. I haven't read it yet. Heaven send I'll have some good ideas again soon!!!

Yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

Please remember me very kindly to Johnson.
My address is:

Artillerie Autodetachment
"Oblt Gürth"
Feldpost No 186.

1915

45. To J. M. Keynes, [4.1.1915]

K.u.k. Art. Autodetachment
Feldpost No 186

Dear Keynes,

I've got the letter you wrote to me in September. The money will be sent to the registry as soon as the war will be over. Please give my love to Johnson whom I appreciate more and more the longer I haven't seen him.

If you get this please write to me to the above address via the red cross Switzerland.

Yours

L. Wittgenstein

Date added by Keynes. Probably the date of receipt (cf. **47**).

K.u.k. – Kaiserliche and königliche, Imperial and Royal, the style of institutions common to Austria and Hungary.

the money – Presumably that intended for Johnson (see **15** above).

46. From J. M. Keynes, 10.1.1915

10 January 1915
Kings College
Cambridge

Dear Wittgenstein,

I am astonished to have got a letter from you. Do you think it proves that you existed within a short time of my getting it? I think so. I hope you have been safely taken prisoner by now.

Russell and I have given up philosophy for the present – I to give my services to the Govt for financial business, he to agitate for peace. But Moore and Johnson go on just as usual. Russell, by the way, brought out a new book at about the beginning of the War.

Pinsent had not joined the army by the middle of October but I have not heard since.

Your dear friend Békássy is in your army and your very dear friend Bliss is a private in ours.

It must be pleasanter to be at war than to think about propositions in Norway. But I hope you will stop such self-indulgence soon.

Yours

J. M. Keynes

This is presumably the letter received by Wittgenstein on 25 January, according to his code diary: "nicht sehr lieb" ("Not specially friendly"), he comments. It is of some interest that Wittgenstein scribbled logical formulae and illustrations of facts – "aRb", "cPd", and models projecting * - - - - * on to x - - - - x in the space left blank by Keynes, echoing the discussion of propositions and pictures in his Notebooks for this period.

give my services to the Govt. – Keynes joined the Treasury on 3 August 1914 and served brilliantly until June 1919, when he left in a disagreement over the Treaty negotiations in Paris. See Roy Harrod, *The Life of John Maynard Keynes* (London: Macmillan, 1951), and the first volume of Robert Skidelsky's *John Maynard Keynes* (London: Macmillan, 1983).

to agitate for peace – Russell, in vol. II of his *Autobiography*, describes his opposition to the war as beginning precisely when Keynes left Cambridge for the Treasury but it intensified as the war proceeded. It cost him his lecturership at Trinity and earned him a spell in prison. See also Alan Ryan, *Russell: A Political Life* (London: Allen Lane, 1988).

a new book – Presumably *Our Knowledge of the External World*, on which see note to **33** above.

friend Békássy . . . very dear friend Bliss – Ferenc Békássy and F. K. Bliss, the former a Hungarian nobleman, were both of them Kingsmen and members of the Society (see **37** above) whose company Wittgenstein was known to dislike (see P. Levy, *Moore*, pp. 268ff.). Both fell in the war.

47. To J. M. Keynes, [25.1.1915]

K.u.k. Art. Autodetachement
"Oblt. Gürth"
Feldpost No 186

Dear Keynes,

Got your letter you wrote January 10th today. I'm very interested to hear that Russell has published a book lately. Could you possibly send it to me and let me pay you after the war? I'd so much like to see it. By the way, you're quite wrong if you think that being a soldier prevents me from thinking about propositions. As a matter of fact I've done a good deal of logical work lately, and hope to do a good deal more soon. – Please give my love to Johnson. The war hasn't altered my private feelings in the least (thank God!!) Or rather: I think I've grown a little milder. I wonder if Russell has been able to make anything out from the notes I gave to Moore last Easter?

Yours

L. Wittgenstein

K.u.k. – See note on **45**.

published a book lately – For the date and for the book by Russell referred to, see notes on **46**.

notes I gave to Moore last Easter – See **42** and **44** above.

48. From B. Russell, 5.2.1915

Trinity College,
Cambridge
5 Feb. 1915

My dear Wittgenstein

It was a *very* great happiness to hear from you – I had been thinking of you constantly and longing for news. I am amazed that you have been able to write a MS. on logic since the war began. I cannot tell you how great a joy it will be to see you again after the war, if all goes well. If only your MSS come to me, I will do my utmost to understand them and make others understand them; but without your help it will be difficult.

Your letter came about 3 weeks ago – I did not know how I should answer it, but I am enabled to by the kindness of an American who is going to Italy.

Please remember me to your mother, and tell her that you are constantly in my mind with anxious affection.

Ever yours
Bertrand Russell

This letter came to the Russell Archives from W. H. Watson, a physicist who attended Wittgenstein's lectures in 1930 (see letters from him below **143**, **146–54**, etc.). Though sent by Russell it was returned (see **49**) and was given to Wittgenstein only after the war. In the 1930s Wittgenstein made a present of it to Watson.

to hear from you – Russell is referring to Wittgenstein's letter (**44**), apparently of December 1914.

49. From B. Russell, 10.5.1915

Trinity College,
Cambridge.
10.5.15

Lieber Wittgenstein!

Dein Brief vom 13ten April ist eben jetzt angekommen – ich freue mich sehr Nachrichten von Dir zu bekommen. Als ich Deinen vorigen Brief erhielt, habe ich sofort geantwortet, zur selben Zeit als ich Deiner Mutter schrieb, aber der Brief ist nach zwei Monaten zurückgekommen – er soll zu freundlich gewesen sein! Von Deiner Mutter habe ich neulich einen sehr lieben Brief bekommen – bitte schicke ihr meinen besten Dank dafür.

Wenn Du dafür die Zeit hast, so solltest Du in Krakau einen einsamen alten Logiker besuchen, Namens M. Dziewicki, Szczepanska, II. Er hat die "Principia Mathematica" studiert, und kennt wahrscheinlich niemand der sich mit der modernen Logik beschäftigt. Es würde ihm gewiß große Freude machen, Dich zu sehen.

Ich habe alles von Moore erhalten, was er über Tautologien etc. zu berichten hatte; es war mir aber nur in geringem Maaße verständlich. Ich hoffe aus ganzem Herzen daß Du mir nach dem Kriege alles mündlich erklären wirst. Seit der Krieg anfing, ist es mir unmöglich über Philosophie zu denken – daran wird aber wohl schließlich ein Ende sein. Ich denke fortwährend an Dich, und sende Dir die herzlichsten Wünsche.

Dein

Bertrand Russell

Dein Brief vom 13ten April / your letter of 13 April – This appears to be lost.

Dziewicki – M. H. Dziewicki, who among other things taught English in Cracow, had published a paper on scholastic philosophy in the *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*. He was in philosophical correspondence with Russell during this period. Two postcards from Dziewicki to Wittgenstein (now in the Brenner Archiv in Innsbruck) show that there were visits to Dziewicki's house by Wittgenstein in (apparently) June 1915 and philosophical discussion (e.g. of the problem of the contiguity of instants of time). After the war Dziewicki wrote to Russell (the letters are in the Russell Archives):

> I am glad to get news of Wittgenstein; a most genial young man, whom I was very much pleased to meet. Will you tell him how much I rejoice to know that his gloomy forebodings have not been realized.

Internal evidence suggests that "a young man of genius" is meant. Against the last quoted sentence is a note in Russell's hand: "He expected to be killed in Russia." In further letters Dziewicki requests a copy of *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* and later comments on the work, saying *inter alia* that its doctrine that belief is not a relation had been one of the main points of difference between him and Wittgenstein in their discussions.

English Translation

Dear Wittgenstein,

Your letter of 13 April has just arrived – I am very happy to have news from you. When I received your earlier letter, I replied at once, at the same time as I wrote to

your mother. But the letter came back two months later: it seems to have been too friendly! I have recently had a very kind letter from your mother – please send her my best thanks for it.

In Cracow, if you have the time for it, you should visit a lonely old logician called M. Dziewicki, Szczepanska, II. He has studied *Principia Mathematica* and probably knows no one who has concerned himself with modern logic. It would certainly give him great pleasure to see you.

I have got from Moore everything he had to report about tautologies etc., but it was intelligible to me only in very small measure. I hope with all my heart that you will explain everything to me orally after the war. Since the war began, it has been impossible for me to think about philosophy – but no doubt that will come to an end some day. I think of you continually and send you most heartfelt wishes.

Yours

Bertrand Russell

50. To B. Russell, 22.5.1915

K.u.k. Werkstätte der Festung Krakau
Feldpost No 186
22.5.15.

Lieber Russell!

Erhielt heute Deinen lieben Brief vom 10.5. Dziewicki werde ich so bald als möglich besuchen; bin schon sehr neugierig auf ihn.

Daß Du Moores Aufschreibungen nicht hast verstehen können tut mir außerordentlich leid! Ich fühle, daß sie ohne weitere Erklärung sehr schwer verständlich sind, aber ich halte sie doch im Wesentlichen für endgültig richtig. Was ich in der letzten Zeit geschrieben habe wird nun, wie ich fürchte, noch unverständlicher sein; und, wenn ich das Ende dieses Krieges nicht mehr erlebe, so muß ich mich darauf gefaßt machen, daß meine ganze Arbeit verloren geht. – Dann soll mein Manuskript gedruckt werden, ob es irgend einer versteht, oder nicht! –

Die Probleme werden immer lapidarer und allgemeiner und die Methode hat sich durchgreifend geändert. –

Hoffen wir auf ein Wiedersehen nach dem Krieg! Sei herzlichst gegrüßt von

Deinem treuen
Ludwig Wittgenstein

K.u.k. – See note on **45**.

Dziewicki – See note on **49**.

Moores Aufschreibungen – See **41** and **42**.

English Translation

Dear Russell

Received today your kind letter of 10.5. I will visit Dziewicki as soon as possible; I'm already very curious about him.

I'm extremely sorry that you weren't able to understand Moore's notes. I feel that they're very hard to understand without further explanation, but I regard them essentially as definitive. And now I'm afraid that what I've written recently will be still more incomprehensible, and if I don't live to see the end of this war I must be prepared for all my work to go for nothing. – In that case you must get my manuscript printed whether anyone understands it or not. –

The problems are becoming more and more lapidary and general and the method has changed drastically. –

Let's hope for a reunion after the war! Warmest regards from

Your devoted friend
Ludwig Wittgenstein

51. To B. Russell, 22.10.1915

Frau Elsa Gröger
Gut Wangensbach
Küsnacht (Zch.)
22.10.15.

Lieber Russell!

Ich habe in der letzten Zeit sehr viel gearbeitet und, wie ich glaube, mit gutem Erfolg. Ich bin jetzt dabei das Ganze zusammenzufassen und in Form einer Abhandlung niederzuschreiben. Ich werde nun keinesfalls etwas veröffentlichen, ehe Du es gesehen hast. Das kann aber natürlich erst nach dem Kriege geschehen. Aber, wer weiß, ob ich das erleben werde. Falls ich es nicht mehr erlebe, so laß Dir von meinen Leuten meine ganzen Manuscripte schicken, darunter befindet sich auch die letzte Zusammenfassung mit Bleistift auf losen Blättern geschrieben. Es wird Dir vielleicht einige Mühe machen alles zu verstehen, aber laß Dich dadurch nicht abschrecken. Meine gegenwärtige Adresse ist:

K.u.k. Artillerie Werkstätten Zug No 1
Feldpost No 12.

Hast Du Pinsent in der letzten Zeit einmal gesehen? Wenn Du Johnson siehst so grüße ihn bestens von mir. Ich denke noch immer gerne an ihn und an unsere fruchtlosen und aufgeregten Disputationen. Möge der Himmel geben, daß wir uns noch einmal sehen!

Sei herzlichst gegrüßt von

Deinem treuen
Wittgenstein

Frau Elsa Gröger – Her address is stamped on both letter and envelope, which thus seemed to originate in neutral Switzerland and hence perhaps might arrive sooner or more securely. She was Wittgenstein's aunt, a sister of his mother, and lived near Zürich; later she petitioned the Vatican to secure his early release from prison-camp. See McGuinness, *Young Ludwig*, pp. 275f. (in the first impression of that work her surname by a misreading was given as "Gräzer").

Zusammenfassung / final summary – This was probably the first of about three preliminary versions of the *Tractatus* (McGuinness, *Young Ludwig*, p. 237, and *Approaches to Wittgenstein*, p. 266). Note the use of the description "Abhandlung", anticipating the title eventually used.

Johnson – See **15** above and **111** below.

English Translation

Dear Russell,

I have recently done a great deal of work and, I think, quite successfully. I'm now in the process of summarizing it all and writing it down in the form of a treatise. Now: whatever happens I won't publish anything until you have seen it. But, of

course, that can't happen until after the war. But who knows whether I shall survive until then? If I don't survive, get my people to send you all my manuscripts: among them you'll find the final summary written in pencil on loose sheets of paper. It will perhaps cost you some trouble to understand it all, but don't let yourself be put off by that. My present address is:

K.u.k. Artillerie Werkstätten Zug No 1
Feldpost No 12

Have you seen anything of Pinsent recently? If you see Johnson, please give him my best regards. I still remember him with great pleasure, as also the fruitless and heated discussions we used to have. Heaven grant that we may meet again sometime!

Warmest regards from

Your devoted friend
Wittgenstein

52. From B. Russell, 25.11.1915

34 Russell Chambers
Bury Str. W.C.
25 Nov. 1915

Lieber Wittgenstein!

Es war mir eine sehr große Freude Deinen lieben Brief zu erhalten – erst vor einigen Tagen ist er angekommen. Es freut mich ganz außerordentlich daß Du eine Abhandlung schreibst die Du veröffentlichen willst. Ich glaube kaum daß es notwendig sei bis zum Ende des Krieges zu warten. Könntest Du nicht das MS. vervielfältigen lassen und nach Amerika schicken? Professor Ralph Barton Perry, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass., U.S.A., kennt Deine früheren logischen Theorien durch mich. Er würde mir das MS. Schicken, und ich wurde es veröffentlichen.

Seit langer Zeit habe ich weder Pinsent noch Johnson gesehen. Ich bin während diesem Winter nicht in Cambridge. Nächstes Frühjahr kehre ich zurück.

Wie schön wird es sein wenn wir uns endlich wiedersehen! Ich denke fortwährend an Dich, und wünsche Nachrichten von Dir zu bekommen. Sei glücklich, und möge der Schicksal Dich schonen!

Dein treuer
Bertrand Russell

Deinen . . . Brief / your . . . letter – Refers to **50**.

Perry – Ralph Barton Perry (1876–1957), an eminent philosopher at Harvard, where Russell in 1914 explained Wittgenstein's ideas, using a version of *Notes on Logic*.

English Translation

Dear Wittgenstein,

It was a very great pleasure for me to receive your kind letter – it arrived only a few days ago. I am absolutely delighted that you are writing a treatise, and want it published. I hardly think that it is necessary to wait until the end of the war. Could you not have a copy of the manuscript made and send it to America? Professor Ralph Barton Perry, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass., U.S.A., knows of your previous logical theories from me. He would send me the manuscript and I would publish it.

It is a long time since I have seen either Pinsent or Johnson. This winter I am not in Cambridge. I go back there next spring.

How splendid it will be when we finally meet again. I constantly think of you and want to have news of you. Be happy, and may Fate spare you!

Yours ever,
Bertrand Russell

1919

53. To B. Russell, 9.2.1919

Cassino
Provincia Caserta
Italia
9.2.19.

Dear Russell,

I don't know your precise address but hope these lines will reach you somehow. I am prisoner in Italy since November and hope I may communicate with you after a three years interruption. I have done lots of logical work which I am dying to let you know before publishing it.

Ever yours
Ludwig Wittgenstein

Postcard.

precise address – The postcard was addressed by Wittgenstein to Russell c/o Dr A. N. Whitehead, University College, London.

54. From B. Russell, 3.3.1919

Manor House,
Garsington, Oxford.
3.3.19.

Very glad to hear from you – had been anxious for a long time. I shall be most interested to learn what you have done in Logic. I hope before long it may be possible to hear all about it. Shall be glad of further news – about your health etc.

B. Russell

Together with a duplicate, no doubt occasioned by distrust of postal connections with a prisoner-of-war camp, this postcard was postmarked 8 March on arrival in Cassino.

55. To B. Russell, 10.3.1919

Cassino
Prov[incia] Caserta
Italia
10.3.19.

You can't imagine how glad I was to get your cards! I am afraid though there is no hope that we may meet before long. Unless you came to see me here, but this would be too much joy for me. I can't write on Logic as I'm not allowed to write more than 2 cards (15 lines each) a week. I've written a book which will be published as soon as I get home. I think I have solved our problems finally. Write to me often. It will shorten my prison. God bless you.

Ever yours
Wittgenstein

Postcard.

your cards – **54** and its duplicate.

a book – See **56**.

56. To B. Russell, 13.3.1919

13.3.19.

Dear Russell,

Thanks so much for your postcards dated 2nd and 3rd of March. I've had a *very* bad time, not knowing whether you were dead or alive! I can't write on Logic as I'm not allowed to write more than two p[ost] c[ard]s a week (15 lines each). This letter is an exception, it's posted by an Austrian medical student who goes home tomorrow. I've written a book called "Logisch-Philosophische Abhandlung" containing all my work of the last six years. I believe I've solved our problems finally. This may sound arrogant but I can't help believing it. I finished the book in August 1918 and two months after was made Prigioniere. I've got the manuscript here with me. I wish I could copy it out for you; but it's pretty long and I would have no safe way of sending it to you. In fact you would not understand it without a previous explanation as it's written in quite short remarks. (This of course means that *nobody* will understand it; although I believe, it's all as clear as crystal. But it upsets all our theory of truth, of classes, of numbers and all the rest.) I will publish it as soon as I get home. Now I'm afraid this *won't* be "before long". And consequently it will be a long time yet till we can meet. I can hardly imagine seeing you again! It will be too much! I suppose it would be impossible for you to come and see me here? or perhaps you think it's colossal cheek of me even to think of such a thing. But if you were on the other end of the world and I *could* come to you I would do it.

Please write to me how you are, remember me to Dr Whitehead. Is old Johnson still alive? Think of me often!

Ever yours
Ludwig Wittgenstein

Russell, upon receipt of this letter, copied it out by hand and also had copies typed. We know from his correspondence with Colette (Lady Constance Malleson) of 19, 23, and 24 March 1919 that he meant to send the copies to various people who might be able to help Wittgenstein, among them Keynes and G. M. Trevelyan (see **57** and **59** below and comments). Six clean copies remain in the Russell Archives because the typists at first corrected the spelling, contrary to Russell's explicit instructions. They had to do the work again and we indeed have a copy in the Wittgenstein file of the Keynes Papers, kept at King's College, Cambridge, which retains a few misspellings: "crystall", "immagine", "collossal".

57. From J. M. Keynes, 13.5.1919

Delegazione italiana
al congresso della pace
Hotel Edouard VII
Parigi
13 May 1919

My dear Wittgenstein,

Russell has sent me a letter of yours showing that you are a prisoner of war in Italy and have the manuscript of your book with you; – but have no safe way of dealing with it. Perhaps this is all out of date by now. But in case it is not, I am begging the Italian authorities to do all that is possible in the circumstances and to provide an absolutely safe way of conveying the MS. or other communications to Russell through me. I much hope that it may also be possible to arrange some relaxation of the usual provisions.

I should immensely like to see you again.

Yours ever
J. M. Keynes

Keynes was in Paris for the Peace Conference (see notes on **46** above). This letter was written on a sheet of the headed writing paper of the Italian delegation. For the final attitude of the Italian authorities see notes on **59** below and McGuinness, *Young Ludwig*, p. 276.

58. To J. M. Keynes, 12.6.1919

Cassino
12.6.19.

My dear Keynes,

Please kindly forward the enclosed letter to Russell's address. I wish I could see him somehow or other, for I am sure he won't be able to understand my book without a very thorough explanation, which can't be written. Have you done any more work on probability? My M-S. contains a few lines about it which, I believe, – solve the essential question.

Yours ever

!! Ludwig Wittgenstein

enclosed letter – **59** below is meant.

work on probability – Keynes had been working on probability for many years. For his *Treatise on Probability* see **61** below and Skidelsky's *John Maynard Keynes*, especially vol. 2, pp. 56ff. In the *Tractatus* a logical definition of probability is given in the propositions 5.15ff.

!! – probably a mild expression of amazement added by Keynes.

59. To B. Russell, 12.6.1919

Cassino
12.6.19.

Lieber Russell!

Vor einigen Tagen schickte ich Dir mein Manuskript durch Keynes's Vermittelung. Ich schrieb damals nur ein paar Zeilen für Dich hinein. Seither ist nun Dein Buch ganz in meine Hände gelangt und nun hätte ich ein großes Bedürfnis Dir einiges zu schreiben. – Ich hätte nicht geglaubt, daß das, was ich vor 6 Jahren in Norwegen dem Moore diktierte an Dir so spurlos vorübergehen würde. Kurz ich fürchte jetzt, es möchte sehr schwer für mich sein mich mit Dir zu verständigen. Und der geringe Rest von Hoffnung mein M.S. könne Dir etwas sagen, ist ganz verschwunden. Einen Kommentar zu meinem Buch zu schreiben, bin ich, wie Du Dir denken kannst, nicht im Stande. Nur mündlich könnte ich Dir einen geben. Ist Dir irgend an dem Verständnis der Sache etwas gelegen und kannst Du ein Zusammentreffen mit mir bewerkstelligen, so bitte, tue es. – Ist dies nicht möglich, so sei so gut und schicke das M.S. so bald Du es gelesen hast auf sicherem Wege nach Wien zurück. Es ist das einzige korrigierte Exemplar, welches ich besitze und die Arbeit meines Lebens! Mehr als je brenne ich *jetzt* darauf es gedruckt zu sehen. Es ist bitter, das vollendete Werk in der Gefangenschaft herumschleppen zu müssen und zu sehen, wie der Unsinn draußen sein Spiel treibt! Und ebenso bitter ist es zu denken daß niemand es verstehen wird, auch wenn es gedruckt sein wird! – Hast Du mir jemals seit Deinen zwei ersten Karten geschrieben? Ich habe nichts erhalten.

Sei herzlichst gegrüßt und *glaube nicht, daß alles Dummheit ist was Du nicht verstehen wirst*.

Dein treuer
Ludwig Wittgenstein

ein paar Zeilen / a couple of lines – No doubt on a separate sheet for they are not to be found in the manuscript then sent (in reality a typescript with manuscript additions and corrrections). It is now in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS German d. 6.

Dein Buch / your book – Russell's *Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy*, which was published in March 1919. In a letter to Keynes of 23 March 1919 Russell says that he wanted to send his "new book" to Wittgenstein but that he does not know whether this will be possible. He also says that he had written to George Trevelyan asking him whether he could do anything to obtain permission for Wittgenstein to "communicate freely about logic". Russell wonders whether Keynes could "speak to anybody about him" and concludes the letter by saying "I wish he could get permission to come to England". Trevelyan did obtain, through Dr Filippo de Filippi, permission for Wittgenstein to receive books. Filippi recommended sending them by letter post and, at Russell's request to the publisher Stanley Unwin, the book was sent by letter post and in parts (hence "ist . . . ganz in meine Hände gelangt" [has reached me *in toto*]). Some such postal difficulty perhaps accounts for the fact that Wittgenstein sent his typescript to Russell through Keynes (cf. **58**).

English Translation

Dear Russell,

Some days ago I sent you my manuscript through Keynes's intermediacy. At that time I enclosed only a couple of lines for you. Since then your book has reached me *in toto* and I'd very much like to write some things to you. – I should never have believed that the stuff I dictated to Moore in Norway six years ago would have passed over you so completely without trace. In short, I'm now afraid that it might be very difficult for me to reach any understanding with you. And the small remaining hope that my manuscript might mean something to you has completely vanished. As you can imagine, I'm in no position to write a commentary on my book. I could only give you one orally. If you attach any importance whatsoever to understanding the thing and if you can manage to arrange a meeting with me, then please do so. – If that isn't possible, then be so good as to send the manuscript back to Vienna by a safe route as soon as you've read it. It is the only corrected copy I possess and is my life's work! *Now* more than ever I'm burning to see it in print. It's galling to have to lug the completed work round in captivity and to see how nonsense has a clear field outside! And it's equally galling to think that no one will understand it even if it does get printed! – Have you written to me at all since your first two postcards? I've received nothing.

Warmest regards and *don't think that everything that you won't understand is a piece of stupidity*.

Your devoted friend
Ludwig Wittgenstein

60. From B. Russell, 21.6.1919

70, Overstrand Mansions,
Prince of Wales Road,
Battersea, S. W.
21 June 1919

Dear Wittgenstein,

Your letter reached me today, but your MS. has not come yet. It is true that what you dictated to Moore was not intelligible to me, and he would give me no help. I think probably it is true that I shan't understand your MS till I see you, but it will be easier to get understanding from your talk if I have read the MS carefully first. At the moment, I could not get a passport to go abroad, but that won't last. I think probably it will be possible for us to meet at Christmas time, but it is not likely to be possible sooner.

I wrote only two post-cards, as I thought letters would not be allowed. But I wrote innumerable letters about you, trying to get greater freedom for you. They bore some slight fruit, but not as much as I hoped. I also wrote to your mother, but the letter was returned to me! – Please don't be discouraged about my understanding your work. Throughout the war I did not think about philosophy, until, last summer, I found myself in prison, and beguiled my leisure by writing a popular text-book, which was all I could do under the circumstances. Now I am back at philosophy, and more in the mood to understand.

I shall read your MS the moment I get it, and return it. What will be the address to which it is to be returned? All friendship and affection from me to you. Don't be discouraged – you will be understood in the end.

Yours ever
B. Russell.

Your letter – That of 12 June (**59**) is evidently meant.

innumerable letters – See notes on **56** and **58**.

in prison – See notes to **46** above.

popular text-book – Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy. The original entry (1981) for Russell in the *Dictionary of National Biography* (by A. M. Quinton) says of this work, "Comparing it with some of his later books, often spasmodic and casual, one might wish he had been imprisoned more often." A statement from which Oxford University Press seems to have resiled.

61. From J. M. Keynes, 28.6.1919

King's College
Cambridge
28 June 1919

My dear Wittgenstein,

Your book has safely reached me and I am forwarding it immediately to Russell. As soon as peace is safely signed, is there any good likelihood of our seeing you in England?

I had nearly finished my book on Probability in the summer of 1914 and most of it, indeed, was actually in print. But the war stopped all such thoughts. I hope now soon to take it up again and at last publish early next year.

Yours ever
J. M. Keynes

Probability – The book was published by Macmillan in 1921.

62. From B. Russell, 13.8.1919

70, Overstrand Mansions
Prince of Wales Road,
Battersea, S.W.
13 August 1919

Dear Wittgenstein,

I have now read your book twice carefully. – There are still points I don't understand – some of them important ones – I send you some queries on separate sheets. I am convinced you are right in your main contention, that logical props are tautologies, which are not true in the sense that substantial props are true. I do not understand why you are content with a purely ordinal theory of number, nor why you use for the purpose an ancestral relation, when you object to ancestral relations. This part of your work I want further explained. Also you do not state your reasons against classes. *I am sure you are right in thinking the book of first-class importance.* But in places it is obscure through brevity. I have a most intense desire to see you, to talk it over, as well as simply because I want to see you. But I can't get abroad as yet. Probably you will be free to come to England before I am free to go abroad. – I will send back your MS when I know where to send it, but I am hoping you will soon be at liberty.

All best wishes. Do write again soon.

Yours ever,
B. Russell

[The separate sheet with queries:]

Wittgenstein

2. What is the difference between Tatsache and Sachverhalt?

3. "Das logische Bild der Tatsachen ist der Gedanke." Yes, I agree. But a Gedanke is a Tatsache: what are its constituents and components, and what is their relation to those of the pictured Tatsache?

3.331. The theory of types, in my view, is a theory of correct symbolism: (a) a simple symbol must not be used to express anything complex; (b) more generally, a symbol must have the same structure as its meaning.

4 & 4.001. "Der Gedanke ist der sinnvolle Satz." "Die Gesamtheit der Sätze ist die Sprache." Does a Gedanke consist of words? Compare 3 (above).

4.112. I agree strongly with this number.

4.1272. I suppose this hangs together with the rejection of identity. It is awkward to be unable to speak of Nc'V. One could still say

$$(\exists\phi)\ .\ \mathrm{Nc}'\hat{x}(\phi x) > \mathrm{V}$$
$$(\phi)\quad .\ \mathrm{Nc}'\hat{x}(\phi x) \leq \mathrm{V}$$

and I should have thought that from such props one could obtain a meaning for "there are at least 2 Gegenstände" – for you, "$(\exists x, y, \phi)\ .\ \phi x\ .\ \phi y$" would suffice – and similar statements. There are things that puzzle me in this number and the next.

4.211. I gather no elementary prop is negative.
4.51. It is necessary also to be given the prop that all elementary props are given.
5.15. This theory of probability seems to me right.
5.3 All props results of truth-operations on elementary props? How about generality?
5.453. No numbers in logic? Why?
5.53 seq. On identity. I agree with this. But the connection with the axiom of infinity seems dubious. See remark on 4.1272 above.
6. "General truth-function: $[\bar{p}, \bar{\xi}, N(\bar{\xi})]$"
Yes, this is *one* way. But could one not do equally well by making $N(\bar{\xi})$ mean "at least one value of ξ is false", just as one can do equally well with $\sim p \vee \sim q$ and with $\sim p.\sim q$ as fundamental? I feel as if the duality of generality and existence persisted covertly in your system.
6.03. "General form of integer: $[0,\xi,\xi,+1]$". You only get finite ordinals. You deny classes, so cardinals collapse. What happens to $\aleph_0$? If you said classes were superfluous in *logic* I would imagine that I understood you, by supposing a distinction between logic and mathematics; but when you say they are unnecessary in *mathematics* I am puzzled. E.g. *something* true is expressed by $Nc'Cl'\alpha = 2^{Nc'\alpha}$. How do you re-state this prop?

I agree with what you say about induction, causality, etc.; at least, I can find no ground for disagreeing.

English translation of German passages in the queries. The Ramsey–Ogden version, not always felicitously, but under the influence of Russell and Wittgenstein himself, adopts the following translations (*Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, ed. C. K. Ogden (London: Kegan Paul, 1922)):

2. *Tatsache*, fact. *Sachverhalt*, atomic fact.
3. "The logical picture of the facts is the thought."
4. "The thought is the significant proposition."
4.001. "The totality of propositions is the language."
4.1272. *Gegenstände*, objects.

63. To B. Russell, 19.8.1919

Cassino
19.8.19.

Dear Russell,

Thanks so much for your letter dated 13 August. As to your queries, I can't answer them *now*. For firstly I don't know always what the numbers refer to, having no copy of the M.S. here. Secondly some of your questions want a very lengthy answer and you know how difficult it is for me to write on logic. That's also the reason why my book is so short, and consequently so obscure. But that I can't help. – Now I'm afraid you haven't really got hold of my main contention, to which the whole business of logical prop[osition]s is only a corollary. The main point is the theory of what can be expressed (gesagt) by prop[osition]s – i.e. by language – (and, which comes to the same, what can be *thought*) and what can not be expressed by prop[osition]s, but only shown (gezeigt); which, I believe, is the cardinal problem of philosophy.

I also sent my M.S. to Frege. He wrote to me a week ago and I gather that he doesn't understand a word of it all. So my only hope is to see *you* soon and explain all to you, for it is VERY hard not to be understood by a single soul!

Now the day after tomorrow we shall probably leave the Campo Concentramento and go home. Thank God! – But how can we meet as soon as possible? I should like to come to England, but you can imagine that it's rather awkward for a German to travel to England now. (By far more so, than for an Englishman to travel to Germany.) But in fact I didn't think of asking you to come to Vienna now, but it would seem to me the best thing to meet in Holland or Switzerland. Of course, if you can't come abroad I will do my best to get to England. Please write to me as soon as possible about this point, letting me know when you are likely to get the permission of coming abroad. Please write to Vienna IV. Alleegasse 16. As to my M.S., please send it to the same address; but only if there is an absolutely safe way of sending it. Otherwise please keep it. I should be very glad though, to get it soon, as it's the only corrected copy I've got. – My mother wrote to me, she was very sorry not to have got your letter, but glad that you tried to write to her at all.

Now write soon. Best wishes.

Ever yours
Ludwig Wittgenstein

P.S. After having finished my letter I feel tempted after all to answer some of your simpler points:

(1) "What is the difference between Tatsache and Sachverhalt?" Sachverhalt is, what corresponds to an Elementarsatz if it is true. Tatsache is, what corresponds to the logical product of elementary prop[osition]s when this product is true. The reason why I introduce *Tatsache* before introducing *Sachverhalt* would want a long explanation.

(2) ". . . But a Gedanke is a Tatsache: what are its constituents and components, and what is their relation to those of the pictured Tatsache?" I don't know *what* the constituents of a thought are but I know *that* it must have such constituents which

correspond to the words of Language. Again the kind of relation of the constituents of thought and of the pictured fact is irrelevant. It would be a matter of psychology to find it out.

(3) "The theory of types, in my view, is a theory of correct symbolism: (a) a simple symbol must not be used to express anything complex; (b) more generally, a symbol must have the same structure as its meaning." That's exactly what one can't say. You cannot prescribe to a symbol what it *may* be used to express. All that a symbol CAN express, it MAY express. This is a short answer but it is true!

(4) Does a Gedanke consist of words? No! But of psychical constituents that have the same sort of relation to reality as words. What those constituents are I don't know.

(5) "It is awkward to be unable to speak of Nc'$\bar{\text{V}}$". This touches the cardinal question of what can be expressed by a prop[osition], and what can't be expressed, but only shown. I can't explain it at length here. Just think that, what you want to say by the apparent prop[osition] "there are 2 things" is *shown* by there being two names which have different meanings (or by there being one name which may have two meanings). A prop[osition] e.g. $\varphi(a, b)$ or $(\exists\varphi, x, y).\varphi(x, y)$ doesn't say that there are two things, it says something quite different; *but whether it's true or false, it* SHOWS what you want to *express* by saying: "there are 2 things".

(6) Of course no elementary prop[osition]s are negative.

(7) "It is necessary also to be given the prop[osition] that all elementary prop[osition]s are given." This is not necessary, because it is even *impossible*. There is no such prop[osition]! That all elementary prop[osition]s are given is SHOWN by there being none having an elementary sense which is not given. This is again the same story as in No 5.

(8) I suppose you didn't understand the way, how I separate in the old notation of generality what is in it truth-function and what is purely generality. A general prop[osition] is A truth-function of *all* PROP[OSITION]S of a certain form.

(9) You are quite right in saying that "$\text{N}(\bar{\xi})$" may also be made to mean $\sim p \vee \sim q \vee \sim r \vee \sim \ldots$ But this doesn't matter! I suppose you don't understand the notation of "$\bar{\xi}$". It does not mean "for all values of $\xi \ldots$". But all is said in my book about it and I feel unable to write it again. Try to understand it till we meet, I never thought I could write such long explanations as I've done now.

Ever yours,
L.W.

64. To B. Russell, 30.8.1919

Wien XVII.
Neuwaldeggerstr[aße] 38
30.8.19.

Lieber Russell!

Verzeih', daß ich Dich mit einer dummen Bitte belästige: Ich bin jetzt mit einer Kopie meines M.S.s zu einem Verleger gegangen, um den Druck endlich in die Wege zu leiten. Der Verleger, der natürlich weder meinen Namen kennt, noch etwas von Philosophie versteht, verlangt das Urteil irgend eines Fachmanns, um sicher zu sein, daß das Buch wirklich wert ist, gedruckt zu werden. Er wollte sich deshalb an einen seiner Vertrauensmänner hier wenden (wahrscheinlich an einen Philosophie-Professor). Ich sagte ihm, nun, daß hier niemand das Buch beurteilen könne, daß *Du* aber vielleicht so gut sein würdest, ihm ein kurzes Urteil über den Wert der Arbeit zu schreiben; was, wenn es günstig ausfällt, ihm genügen wird um den Verlag zu übernehmen. Die Adresse des Verlegers ist: Wilhelm Braumüller XI. Servitengasse 5 Wien. Ich bitte Dich nun, dorthin ein paar Worte, so viel Du vor Deinem Gewissen verantworten kannst, zu schreiben.

Auch an mich schreib, bitte, recht bald! Wie es Dir geht, wann Du auf den Continent kommen kannst, etc., etc. Wie Du siehst bin ich aus der Gefangenschaft zurück, ich bin aber doch noch nicht ganz normal. Aber das wird schon kommen. Sei herzlichst gegrüßt!

Dein treuer
Ludwig Wittgenstein

Braumüller XI. Servitengasse – The original publisher of Otto Weininger's *Sex and Character* and of Oswald Spengler's *Decline of the West*. The address should read IX. Servitengasse.

English Translation

Dear Russell,

Forgive me if I burden you with a stupid request. I've now been to a publisher with a copy of my manuscript in order to get its printing finally under way. The publisher, who naturally neither knows my name nor understands anything about philosophy, requires the judgment of some expert in order to be sure that the book is really worth printing. For this purpose he wanted to apply to one of the people he relies on here (probably a professor of philosophy). So I told him that no one here would be able to form a judgment on the book, but that *you* would perhaps be kind enough to write him a brief assessment of the value of the work, and if this happened to be favourable that would be enough to induce him to publish it. The publisher's address is: Wilhelm Braumüller, XI Servitengasse 5, Vienna. Now please write him a few words – as much as your conscience will allow you to.

Please write to me too, very soon – how you are, when you can come to the continent, etc., etc. As you can see, I'm back from prison-camp. I'm not quite normal yet, though. But that will come in time. Warmest regards.

Your devoted friend
Ludwig Wittgenstein

65. From B. Russell, 8.9.1919

70, Overstrand Mansions,
Prince of Wales Road,
Battersea, S. W.
8.9.19.

Dear Wittgenstein,

Thank you for your letter and explanations, which have helped me a great deal. I am re-reading your book, and will return it as soon as I can do so safely, with remarks. I am very very much impressed by it, though whether it is definitive I don't yet feel sure.

This letter is only about meeting. The only plan that I can see is to try to meet at The Hague at Christmas time – it is doubtful whether I can get leave, for, as you may know, I have fallen out with the Government – but I will do all I possibly can to get permission. I can't come sooner as I have lectures to give, and getting permission will take a long time. Please let me know whether you would probably be able to come to Holland at Christmas or soon after – I could manage a week, if the government will let me go.

I will write later about your book. I hope you are at liberty now and back in Austria – Has the war injured you in any way?

Yours ever
Bertrand Russell

your letter – That of 19 August (**63**). Wittgenstein's letter of 30 August from Vienna and freedom (**64**) had clearly not yet arrived.

fallen out with the Government – Over his opposition to the war.

66. From B. Russell, 12.9.1919

70, Overstrand Mansions,
Prince of Wales Road,
Battersea, S.W.
12.9.19.

Dear Wittgenstein,

I have written to your publisher, praising your book in the highest terms. I hope the letter will reach him. – I wrote to you a few days ago, to your old address, saying that if I can obtain permission I will come to Holland at Christmas for a week to see you – I can't manage sooner or longer, worse luck. I am very thankful you are free – let me have personal news of your health, experiences etc. as soon as it is possible. Warmest good wishes.

Yours ever
B. Russell.

your publisher – Braumüller. See letter **64**.

67. To B. Russell, 6.10.1919

6.10.19.

Lieber Russell!

Herzlichen Dank für Deinen Brief vom 12.9. Auch mein Verleger hat schon längst Dein Empfehlungsschreiben bekommen, hat mir aber noch immer nicht geschrieben, ob, und unter welchen Bedingungen, er mein Buch nimmt (der Hund!). Ich glaube *bestimmt* zu Weihnachten in den Haag kommen zu können. Nur ein unvorsehbares Ereignis könnte mich daran hindern. Ich habe mich entschlossen Lehrer zu werden und muß dazu noch einmal eine sogenannte Lehrerbildungsanstalt besuchen. Dort sitzen lauter Buben von 17–18 Jahren und ich bin schon 30. Das giebt sehr komische Situationen und oft auch *sehr* unangenehme. Ich fühle mich oft unglücklich! – Mit Frege stehe ich in Briefwechsel. Er versteht kein Wort von meiner Arbeit und ich bin schon ganz erschöpft vor lauter Erklärungen.

Wie geht es Dr Whitehead und Johnson? Schreibe bald.

Dein treuer
Ludwig Wittgenstein

P.S. Wann kannst Du mir voraussichtlich mein M.S. zurückschicken? Meine Adresse ist jetzt:

Wien III., Untere Viaduktgasse 9 bei Frau Wanicek

Aber auch Briefe an meine alte Adresse erreichen mich. Ich wohne nämlich nicht mehr bei meiner Mutter. Ich habe mein ganzes Geld weggeschenkt und werde bald versuchen, mir selbst etwas zu verdienen. *Oft* denke ich an Dich!

L.W.

English Translation

Dear Russell,

Warmest thanks for your letter of 12.9. My publisher too received your testimonial long ago but has still not written to me to say whether and under what conditions he will take my book (the swine!). I think I'll *certainly* be able to come to The Hague at Christmastime. Only some unpredictable occurrence could prevent me. I have made up my mind to become a teacher and so must go back to school at a so-called Teachers' Training College. The benches are full of boys of 17 or 18 and I've reached 30. That leads to some very funny situations – and many *very* unpleasant ones too. I often feel miserable! – I'm in correspondence with Frege. He doesn't understand a single word of my work and I'm thoroughly exhausted from giving what are purely and simply explanations.

How are Dr Whitehead and Johnson? Write soon.

Your devoted friend,
Ludwig Wittgenstein

P.S. When do you think you can send me back by MS? My address now is:

Vienna III., Untere Viaduktgasse 9 bei Frau Wanicek

but letters to my old address will also reach me. The fact is, I'm not living at my mother's any more. I've given all my money away and am shortly going to try to earn something for myself. I think of you *often*!

L.W.

68. From B. Russell, 14.10.1919

70, Overstrand Mansions,
Prince of Wales Road,
Battersea, S.W.
14.10.19

Dear Wittgenstein,

Thanks for your letter, which arrived today. I will send back your book in a few days: I was waiting to know which address to send it to. I have not written things in the blank pages, except once or twice, because talk will be much better. I studied the book rather carefully, and I think now I do fairly understand it. But we shall see. I shall send it to your new address.

It is terrible to think of your having to earn your living, but I am not surprised by your action. I am much poorer too. They say Holland is very expensive but I suppose we can endure a week of it without going bankrupt. I find the time that would suit me best would be before Christmas, about Dec. 13–20 – I ought to be back in England for Christmas. I will see about getting permission, and shall assume that date. It may turn out that Switzerland would be better. – Tell your publisher from me that he is a low scoundrel! My dear Wittgenstein it will be a joy to see you again after all these years – In all friendship,

Yours ever,

Bertrand Russell

I have not written . . . except once or twice – This is indeed true of the Engelmann typescript (TS 202), now in the Bodleian Library, Oxford.

your action – Wittgenstein's giving away all his money (see **67** above).

69. To B. Russell, 1.11.1919

1.11.19.

Lieber Russell!

Ich besorge mir jetzt den Paß für Holland und werde Dich am 10ten Dezember im Haag treffen. Mit dem Geld hat es allerdings eine gewisse Schwierigkeit; eine Woche wird mich aber auf keinen Fall umbringen. – Nun habe ich aber eine Idee, weiß allerdings nicht, ob sie durchführbar ist: Ich habe nämlich seinerzeit, als ich von Cambridge nach Norwegen gezogen bin, alle meine Sachen in Cambridge bei einem Möbelhändler deponiert (seinen Namen habe ich vergessen, es war nicht der Lilies sondern einer in der Nähe von Magdalene College). Es waren viele Bücher, darunter auch ein paar wertvolle, ein Teppich, etc. *Sind nun alle diese Sachen schon verfallen*? Wenn nicht, so hätte ich eine große Bitte an Dich: nämlich, sie zu verkaufen und mir das Geld nach Holland mitzubringen. Bitte sei so gut und schreibe mir, ob das überhaupt möglich ist.

Ich freue mich unbeschreiblich auf unser Wiedersehen.

Sei herzlichst gegrüßt von Deinem treuen
Ludwig Wittgenstein

Meine Adresse ist jetzt:

Wien, XIII, St. Veitgasse 17
bei Frau Sjögren.

Hast Du schon das M.S. abgeschickt?

L.W.

P.P.S. Etwas ÄUSSERST WICHTIGES fallt mir ein: Unter meinen Sachen befinden sich auch eine Menge Tagebücher und Manuscripte diese sind ALLE zu verbrennen!!!

Möbelhändler / furniture dealer – The dealer was B. Jolley & Sons. Russell bought the books and the furniture ("the best bargain I ever made", he says in his *Autobiography*, vol. II, p. 100). Some at least of the books remained in Russell's library and have now joined the Russell Archives at McMaster University. For some account of them see Carl Spadoni and David Harley, "Bertrand Russell's Library", *Journal of Library History, Philosophy and Comparative Librarianship* 20: 1 (Winter 1985), 43–4.

English Translation

Dear Russell,

I am now getting my passport for Holland and will meet you in The Hague on 10 December. To be sure there are certain difficulties over money but whatever happens a week won't kill me. – A thought occurs to me, however, though I don't know whether it's practicable. The thing is that at the time I moved from Cambridge to Norway, I stored all my things in Cambridge at a furniture dealer's. (I've forgotten his

name. It wasn't Lilies but one near Magdalene College.) There were a good few books, including a couple of valuable ones, a carpet, etc. *Now: have I lost all claim to these things? If* not, then I'd like to ask a great favour of you – i.e. to sell them and to bring the money to Holland for me. Please be so good as to write to me if this is at all possible.

I look forward more than I can say to our meeting.

Warmest regards from your devoted friend
Ludwig Wittgenstein

My address now is:

Vienna XIII, St Veitgasse 17
bei Frau Sjögren.

Have you sent the MS yet?

P.P.S. Something EXTREMELY IMPORTANT has just occurred to me. Among my things there are a lot of journal-notebooks and manuscripts. These are ALL to be burnt!!!

70. From B. Russell, 13.11.1919

70, Overstrand Mansions,
Prince of Wales Road,
Battersea, S. W.
13.11.19

Dear Wittgenstein,

Your MS. has been posted to the address you gave in your last letter – it was posted only two days ago, as there were a number of difficulties at the Post Office. I am looking forward to seeing you more than I can say. It is of course *possible* that I may be refused a passport – if so I will let you know at once.

The furniture dealers you mention must be B. Jolley & Son, Bridge Str., Camb. I have written to them saying I have your authority to have your things sold, but I think you should write to them also, otherwise they may refuse to accept my authority. If the sale is not yet completed when I come to Holland, I can give you in advance whatever the furniture, books etc. are judged to be worth. They ought easily to pay your expenses.

In all friendship and affection,

Your

B. Russell

write to them also – It is not clear at what stage (if any) Wittgenstein did so. See **73**.

judged to be worth – The dealers valued the furniture at £80 and Russell suggested £20 more for the books. See **72**.

71. To B. Russell, 21.11.1919

21.11.19.

Lieber Russell!

Heute erhielt ich das M.S. Vielen Dank. Ich habe es bisher nur flüchtig durchgesehen und nur zwei Bemerkungen von Deiner Hand gefunden. Über alles werden wir sprechen, wenn wir uns im Haag treffen. Meinen Pass habe ich bereits und die Einreisebewilligung von Holland werde ich hoffentlich auch bekommen. Ich kann es schon gar nicht mehr erwarten, Dich zu sehen. Hast Du meinen letzten Brief erhalten? Ich bat Dich in ihm meine Sachen in Cambridge, falls sie noch existieren, zu verkaufen und mir den Erlös mit nach Holland zu bringen, da ich mit dem Geld einige Schwierigkeiten habe.

Bitte schreibe bald, Meine Adresse ist: Wien XIII, St. Veitgasse 17 bei Frau Sjögren.

Sei herzlichst gegrüßt

von Deinem treuen

Ludwig Wittgenstein

English Translation

Dear Russell,

I received the MS today. Many thanks. So far I've only leafed through it and found only two remarks in your handwriting. We shall talk about everything when we meet in The Hague. I have my passport already and hope to get the Dutch entry-permit also. Already I can hardly wait to see you. Did you get my last letter? In it I asked you to sell my things in Cambridge, if they still exist, and to bring the proceeds to Holland for me, because I have some difficulties with money.

Please write soon. My address is: Vienna XIII, St Veitgasse 17 c/o Frau Sjögren.

Warmest regards from your devoted friend

Ludwig Wittgenstein

72. From B. Russell, 24.11.1919

70 Overstrand Mansions
Battersea S.W.
24 Nov. '19

Dear Wittgenstein,

I have got my passport but find great difficulties over the Dutch visa, as I dare say you do too. It seems not impossible that we may not be both able to get visas. If I fail, I will wire to you the one word "impossible". In that case, we shall have to wait till Easter, and then meet in Switzerland. I shall be *very* sorry if that happens. But I find (what I didn't know) that Switzerland is much easier to get to than Holland. – Jolley, at Cambridge, offers £80 for your furniture, not including the books. If I go back to Cambridge, which I may do, I should probably be glad to take your furniture, or part of it. Would it suit you if I paid you £100 for the furniture and books (not including any special books that you might want returned[)] and then I could arrange with Jolley what I wanted to keep. I don't know whether it is legally possible to pay you yet, but I will find out. You would have to write to

B. Jolley & Son, Bridge Str. Camb.

to say you had sold the furniture and books to me and they were to deal with me.

Please let me know as soon as you possibly can whether you can get your visa. It will be a very great disappointment if we have to put off meeting till the spring.

Yours ever
Bertrand Russell

73. To B. Russell, 27.11.1919

Wien XIII
St. Veitgasse 17 bei Frau Sjögren
27.11.19.

Lieber Russell!

Dank' Dir bestens für Deinen Brief. Wenn Du nur in den Haag kommen kannst! Bitte TELEGRAPHIERE mir sofort wenn Du es weißt, da ich bereits den Pass habe und angab, daß ich vom 13ten-20ten im Haag zu sein beabsichtige. Eine neuerliche Änderung des Termins würde große Schwierigkeiten machen. Also bitte, laß mich nicht auf Deine Nachricht warten! – Mit dem Möbelhändler hast Du ganz recht, es ist Jolley. Ich glaube aber, er wird schon Deine Bevollmächtigung anerkennen. –

Ich habe jetzt erneute Schwierigkeiten wegen meines Buches. Niemand will es verlegen. Erinnerst Du Dich noch, wie Du mich immer drängtest etwas zu veröffentlichen: und jetzt, wo ich es möchte, geht es nicht. Das soll der Teufel holen!

Wann immer Du in den Haag kommst, laß, bitte, Deine Adresse auf der Österreichischen Gesandtschaft. Dort werde ich sie erfahren.

Sei herzlichst gegrüßt von Deinem immer

treuen

Ludwig Wittgenstein

English Translation

Dear Russell,

Thank you very much for your letter. If only you are able to come to The Hague! Please WIRE me immediately you know because I've got my passport already and have stated my intention of being in The Hague from the 13th to the 20th. A new change of date would give rise to great difficulties. So please don't keep me waiting for your news! – You're quite right about the furniture dealer. It is Jolley. But I think he'll be satisfied with the authority you've got. –

The difficulties with my book have started up again. Nobody wants to publish it. Do you remember how you were always pressing me to publish something? And now when I should like to, it can't be managed. The devil take it!

Whenever you do arrive in The Hague, please leave your address at the Austrian Legation. I'll find it there.

Warmest regards from your devoted friend

as ever

Ludwig Wittgenstein

74. From B. Russell, 27.11.1919

70, Overstrand Mansions,
Prince of Wales Road,
Battersea, S. W.
27.11.19

Dear Wittgenstein

I have my passport and visa; I informed the authorities that my business was to see you. I suggest your arriving *Dec. 11*, as I am not quite sure what day I shall get away. I will buy your furniture from you, which will pay your expenses. I don't know where I shall stay, but will have a letter at *Poste Restante* addressed to you, to say where I am staying, if you arrive after me. If you arrive first, you can do the same. I can't tell you how much I look forward to seeing you – you have been in my thoughts so much all through this long time.

Yours ever
Bertrand Russell

letter at Poste Restante – See the note from Russell, below.

75. From B. Russell, [December 1919]

Hotel Twee Steden
(= des deux Villes)
Buitenhof, Den Haag

Dear Wittgenstein

This is my address – Come here as quick as you can after your arrival in The Hague – I am impatient to see you – We will find some way to get your book published in England if necessary.

Yours ever
B.R.

About his encounter with Wittgenstein, Russell wrote to Lady Ottoline from The Hague on 20 December:

> I have much to tell you that is of interest. I leave here today, after a fortnight's stay, during a week of which Wittgenstein was here, and we discussed his book every day. I came to think even better of it than I had done; I feel sure it is a really great book, though I do not feel sure it is right. I told him I could not refute it, and that I was sure it was either all right or all wrong, which I considered the mark of a good book; but it would take me years to decide this. This of course didn't satisfy him, but I couldn't say more.
>
> I had felt in his book a flavour of mysticism, but was astonished when I found that he has become a complete mystic. He reads people like Kierkegaard and Angelus Silesius, and he seriously contemplates becoming a monk. It all started from William James's Varieties of Religious Experience, and grew (not unnaturally) during the winter he spent alone in Norway before the war, when he was nearly mad. Then during the war a curious thing happened. He went on duty to the town of Tarnov in Galicia, and happened to come upon a bookshop which however seemed to contain nothing but picture poscards. However, he went inside and found that it contained just one book: Tolstoy on The Gospels. He bought it merely because there was no other. He read it and re-read it, and thenceforth had it always with him, under fire and at all times. But on the whole he likes Tolstoy less than Dostoewski (especially Karamazov). He has penetrated deep into mystical ways of thought and feeling, but I think (though he wouldn't agree) that what he likes best in mysticism is its power to make him stop thinking. I don't much think he will really become a monk – it is an idea, not an intention. His intention is to be a teacher. He gave all his money to his brothers and sisters, because he found earthly possessions a burden. I wish you had seen him.

1920

76. To B. Russell, 8.1.1920

Wien XIII
St. Veitgasse 17
8.1.20.

Lieber Russell!

Herzlichen Dank für Deine Bücher; sie werden mich beide interessieren. Wenige Tage nach meiner Ankunft in Wien wurde ich krank, aber jetzt geht es schon wieder. Von meinen vorhabenden Verlegern habe ich noch keine Antwort auf die Mitteilung, daß Du meinem Buch mit einer Einleitung nachhelfen willst. Sobald ich etwas erfahre, schreibe ich Dir.

Wie geht es Dir? Bist Du in Cambridge?

Ich habe unser Beisammensein *sehr* genossen und ich habe das Gefühl daß wir in dieser Woche sehr viel wirklich gearbeitet haben. (Du nicht auch?)

Sei vielmals gegrüßt

von Deinem treuen

Ludwig Wittgenstein

Deine Bücher / your books – The letter makes reference to two books. It is a reasonable conjecture that they were *Our Knowledge of the External World* and the collection of essays, *Mysticism and Logic*.

in Cambridge – Russell was living in London at this time.

English Translation

Dear Russell,

Many thanks for your books. Both of them will be interesting for me. A few days after arriving in Vienna I fell ill but now I'm more or less all right again. I've still no answer from my various prospective publishers to the information that you're willing to come to the aid of my book with an introduction. As soon as I hear anything, I'll write to you.

How are you? Are you in Cambridge?

I enjoyed our time together *very* much and I have the feeling (haven't you too?) that we did a great deal of real work during that week.

Best regards from your devoted friend

Ludwig Wittgenstein

77. To B. Russell, 19.1.1920

Wien XIII
St. Veitgasse 17 bei Frau Sjögren
19.1.20.

Lieber Russell!

Heute erhielt ich die Nachricht, daß der Verlag von Reclam in Leipzig aller Wahrscheinlichkeit nach mein Buch nehmen will. Ich werde also mein M.S. aus Innsbruck kommen lassen und es an Reclam schicken. Wann aber kommt Deine Einleitung?! Denn ohne sie kann ja der Druck nicht beginnen. *Wenn* Du also gewillt bist, sie zu schreiben, so bitte tue es so bald als möglich und lasse mich wissen ob, und wann ich Dein M.S. erwarten darf. Ich vegetiere hier ohne viel Freude am Leben. Schreib mir bald.

Dein treuer
Ludwig Wittgenstein

English Translation

Dear Russell,

I have had word today that the Leipzig publisher Reclam is prepared, in all probability, to take my book. So I will get my MS sent from Innsbruck and will forward it to Reclam. But when is your introduction going to arrive?! Because the printing can't begin without it. So: *if* you're prepared to write it, please do so as soon as possible and let me know whether and when I can expect your MS. I am vegetating here and not enjoying life very much. Write to me soon.

Your devoted friend
Ludwig Wittgenstein

78. From B. Russell, 2.2.1920

70, Overstrand Mansions,
Prince of Wales Road,
Battersea, S.W.
February 2nd, 1920.

Herr Ludwig Wittgenstein
Wien, XIII St. Veitgasse 17.

Dear Wittgenstein,

I have broken my collarbone and am therefore obliged to dictate this letter.

I am very glad to hear that Reclam will probably take your book. I waited to begin writing the introduction until I knew you had a publisher, since the introduction would have had to be quite different if it had been written for publication in England. I will get it done as soon as I possibly can, but I do not think it can be finished for another six weeks. You may, however, absolutely count upon it, and tell your publishers so.

I am very sorry to hear you have been ill.

I do not go back to Cambridge until October.

Keynes, as you may have heard, has written a book of the very greatest importance on the economic consequences of the peace. It is having a great effect upon opinion here, and is likely to do much good.

I loved our time together at the Hague, and was very happy, both in seeing you and in our discussions.

Yours ever,
Bertrand Russell

An answer to Wittgenstein's letters of 8 and 19 January (**76** and **77**).

another six weeks – The Introduction was sent in the middle of March (see **80**).

Keynes . . . has written a book . . . on the economic consequences of the peace – See **105**.

79. To B. Russell, 19.3.1920

19.3.20

Lieber Russell!

Es ist lange her seit Du von mir gehört hast. Wie steht's mit der Einleitung? Ist sie schon fertig? Und wie geht es mit Deinem Schlüsselbein, wie hast Du es Dir denn gebrochen? Wie gern möchte ich Dich wieder sehen. Ich bin nicht mehr im Stande mir neue Freunde zu erwerben und die alten verliere ich. Das ist schrecklich traurig. Fast täglich denke ich an den armen David Pinsent. Denn, so sonderbar das klingt, ich bin fast allen Menschen zu dumm!

Schreib mir bald einmal und schicke auch Deine Einleitung.

Dein trauriger
Ludwig Wittgenstein

English Translation

Dear Russell,

It is a very long time since you heard from me. How are things with the introduction? Is it finished yet? And how is your collarbone? How did you manage to break it? How much I'd like to see you again! I'm no longer in any condition to acquire new friends and I'm losing my old ones. It's terribly sad. Nearly every day I remember poor David Pinsent. Because, however odd it sounds, I'm too stupid for nearly everybody.

Do write to me soon and also send your introduction.

Yours sadly,
Ludwig Wittgenstein

80. From B. Russell, 19.3.1920

70 Overstrand Mansions
Prince of Wales Road
Battersea
London, S.W.
March 19th, 1920.

Dear Wittgenstein,

I am sending you at last the introduction which I promised you three months ago. I am sorry to have been so long about it, but breaking my collarbone made me stupid. I am assuming that you will translate it into German. When I have put in brackets "quote number so-and-so", I have meant that it seemed an appropriate place to insert your actual words in the passages referred to. I did not think it worth while to translate your words into English and have you translate them back into German. If there is anything unsatisfactory to you in my remarks, let me know, and I will try to amend it.

How are you? I should like news of you.

Yours affectionately,
Bertrand Russell

81. To B. Russell, 9.4.1920

9.4.20.

Lieber Russell!

Besten Dank für Dein Manuscript. Ich bin mit so manchem darin nicht ganz einverstanden; sowohl dort, wo Du mich kritisierst, als auch dort, wo Du bloß meine Ansicht klarlegen willst. Das macht aber nichts. Die Zukunft wird über uns urteilen. Oder auch nicht – und wenn sie schweigen wird, so wird das auch ein Urteil sein. – Die Einleitung wird jetzt übersetzt und geht dann mit der Abhandlung zum Verleger. Hoffentlich nimmt er sie! – Hier gibt es wenig Neues. Ich bin so dumm wie gewöhnlich. Meine Adresse ist jetzt: Wien III. Rasumofskygasse 24 (bei Herrn Zimmermann). Sei herzlichst gegrüßt!

Dein treuer
Ludwig Wittgenstein

English Translation

Dear Russell

Thank you very much for your manuscript. There's so much of it that I'm not quite in agreement with – both where you're critical of me and also where you're simply trying to elucidate my point of view. But that doesn't matter. The future will pass judgment on us – or perhaps it won't, and if it is silent that will be a judgment too. – The introduction is in the course of being translated and will then go with the treatise to the publisher. I hope he will accept them! – There's nothing much new here. I am as stupid as usual. My address is now: Vienna III., Rasumofskygasse 24 (c/o Herr Zimmermann). Warmest regards from your devoted friend

Ludwig Wittgenstein

82. To B. Russell, 6.5.1920

6.5.20.

Lieber Russell!

Sei für Deinen lieben Brief herzlich bedankt. Nun wirst Du aber auf mich böse sein, wenn ich Dir etwas erzähle; Deine Einleitung wird nicht gedruckt und infolgedessen wahrscheinlich auch mein Buch nicht. – Als ich nämlich die deutsche Übersetzung der Einleitung vor mir hatte, da konnte ich mich doch nicht entschließen sie mit meiner Arbeit drucken zu lassen. Die Feinheit Deines englischen Stils war nämlich in der Übersetzung – selbstverständlich – verloren gegangen und was übrig blieb war Oberflächlichkeit und Mißverständnis. Ich schickte nun die Abhandlung und Deine Einleitung an Reclam und schrieb ihm, ich wünschte nicht daß die Einleitung gedruckt würde, sondern sie solle ihm nur zur Orientierung über meine Arbeit dienen. Es ist nun höchst wahrscheinlich, daß Reclam meine Arbeit daraufhin nicht nimmt (obwohl ich noch keine Antwort von ihm habe). Aber darüber habe ich mich bereits beruhigt; und zwar mit folgendem Argument, das mir unantastbar erscheint: Meine Arbeit ist nämlich entweder ein Werk ersten Ranges, oder sie ist kein Werk ersten Ranges. Im zweiten – wahrscheinlicheren – Falle bin ich selbst dafür, daß sie nicht gedruckt werde. Und im ersten ist es ganz gleichgültig ob sie 20 oder 100 Jahre früher oder später gedruckt wird. Denn wer fragt danach ob z.B. die Kritik der reinen Vernunft im Jahre 17x oder y geschrieben worden ist! Ja, eigentlich brauchte sie in diesem Falle auch nicht gedruckt zu werden. – Und nun sei nicht bös! Es war vielleicht undankbar von mir, aber ich konnte nicht anders.

Sei herzlichst gegrüßt

von Deinem treuen

Ludwig Wittgenstein

Es wäre herrlich wenn Du im Sommer nach Wien kämst!

deutsche Übersetzung / German translation – This was not the translation printed with Wittgenstein's book by Ostwald in 1921. Ostwald seems to have had a fresh translation made from Russell's English original. Cf. "Historical Introduction", *Prototractatus*, pp. 28–9, and G. H. von Wright, *Wittgenstein* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1982), p. 100.

English Translation

Dear Russell,

Many thanks indeed for your kind letter. But now you'll be angry with me when I tell you something: Your Introduction is not going to be printed and as a consequence my book probably won't be either. – You see, when I actually saw the German translation of the Introduction, I couldn't bring myself to let it be printed with my work. All the refinement of your English style was, obviously, lost in the translation and what remained was superficiality and misunderstanding. Well, I sent the treatise with your Introduction to Reclam and wrote saying that I didn't want the Introduction printed, it was meant to serve only for his own orientation in relation to my

work. It is now highly probable that as a result Reclam won't accept my work (though I've had no answer from him yet). But I've already comforted myself on that score, by means of the following argument, which seems to me unanswerable. Either my piece is a work of the highest rank, or it is not a work of the highest rank. In the latter (and more probable) case I myself am in favour of its not being printed. And in the former case it's a matter of indifference whether it's printed twenty or a hundred years sooner or later. After all, who asks whether the Critique of Pure Reason, for example, was written in 17x or y. So really in the former case too my treatise wouldn't need to be printed. – And now, don't be angry! Perhaps it was ungrateful of me but I couldn't do anything else.

Warmest regards from your devoted friend
Ludwig Wittgenstein

It would be marvellous if you could come to Vienna in the summer.

83. From B. Russell, 1.7.1920

70, Overstrand Mansions,
Prince of Wales Road,
Battersea, S. W.
1.7.20.

Dear Wittgenstein

I returned yesterday from Russia (where there are no posts) and found your letter waiting for me. I don't care twopence about the introduction but I shall be really sorry if your book isn't printed. May I try, in that case, to have it printed in England or America?

I have 2 months' letters to answer so I mustn't write more. Best love, now and always.

Yrs aff.
B.R.

Russia – Russell visited Russia in May and June 1920 as an unofficial member of a Labour Party Delegation.

your letter – That of 6 May (**82**).

84. To B. Russell, 7.7.1920

Wien III
Rasumofskygasse 24/II
bei Herrn Zimmermann
7.7.20

Lieber Russell!

Dank Dir vielmals für Dienen lieben Brief! Reclam hat mein Buch natürlich nicht genommen und ich werde vorläufig keine weiteren Schritte tun, um es zu publizieren. Hast Du aber Lust es drucken zu lassen, so steht es Dir ganz zur Verfügung und *Du kannst damit machen, was Du willst.* (Nur wenn Du am Text etwas änderst, *so gib an, daß die Änderung von Dir ist.*)

Heute habe ich mein Zeugnis bekommen und kann jetzt Lehrer werden. Wie es mir gehen wird – wie ich das Leben ertragen werde – weiß Gott allein. Am besten wäre es vielleicht, ich könnte mich eines Abends hinlegen und nicht mehr aufwachen. (Vielleicht aber gibt es auch noch etwas besseres für mich.) Wir werden ja sehen. –

Sei herzlichst gegrüßt
von Deinem treuen
Ludwig Wittgenstein

mein Zeugnis / my certificate – Wittgenstein's certificate from the teacher's training college in Vienna which he attended in the academic year 1919–20.

English Translation

Dear Russell,

Very many thanks for your kind letter, Reclam has, naturally, not accepted my book and for the moment I won't take any further steps to have it published. But if you feel like getting it printed, it is entirely at your disposal and *you can do what you like with it.* (Only, if you change anything in the text, *indicate that the change was made by you.*)

Today I got my certificate, and I can now become a teacher. How things will go for me – how I'll endure life – God only knows. The best for me, perhaps, would be if I could lie down one evening and not wake up again. (But perhaps there is something better left for me.) We shall see.

Warmest regards from your devoted friend
Ludwig Wittgenstein

85. To B. Russell, 6.8.1920

6.8.20.

Lieber Russell!

Vor ein paar Tagen erhielt ich eine Einladung vom Trinity College zu einem Diner, das am 30. September stattfinden soll. Es wurde gewiß nicht für möglich gehalten, daß ich wirklich kommen könnte; trotzdem hat mich die Einladung sehr gefreut. Möchtest Du so gut sein, und in meinem Namen beim junior Bursar absagen, da ich die Form einer solchen Absage nicht weiß.

Ich verbringe jetzt meine Ferien als Gärtnergehilfe in der Gärtnerei des Stiftes Klosterneuburg bei Wien. Ich muß den ganzen Tag über fest arbeiten; und das ist gut. – Im Inneren geht es mir nicht besonders. – Wann werden wir uns wiedersehen? Vielleicht nie. Täglich denke ich an Pinsent. Er hat mein halbes Leben mit sich genommen. Die andere Hälfte wird der Teufel holen. Bis dahin bin ich immer

Dein treuer

Ludwig Wittgenstein

English Translation

Dear Russell

A few days ago I received an invitation from Trinity College to a dinner to be held on 30 September. It was surely not thought possible that I could actually come, but none the less the invitation gave me a great deal of pleasure. Could you be so good as to write to the Junior Bursar on my behalf declining the invitation, because I don't know the right form for such a thing?

At the moment I'm spending my holidays as a gardener's assistant in the nurseries of the monastery of Klosterneuburg near Vienna. I have to work solidly the whole day through, which is good. – My inner life is nothing to write home about. – When shall we see one another again? Perhaps never. Every day I think of Pinsent. He took half my life away with him. The devil will take the other half. In the meantime I am, as always,

Your devoted friend

Ludwig Wittgenstein

86. To B. Russell, 20.9.1920

20.9.20.

Lieber Russell!

Dank' Dir für Deinen lieben Brief! Ich habe jetzt eine Anstellung bekommen; und zwar als Volksschullehrer in einem der kleinsten Dörfer; es heißt Trattenbach und liegt 4 Stunden südlich von Wien im Gebirge. Es dürfte wohl das erste mal sein, daß der Volksschullehrer von Trattenbach mit einem Universitätsprofessor in Peking korrespondiert. Wie geht es Dir und was trägst Du vor? Philosophie? Dann wollte ich, ich könnte zuhören und dann mit Dir streiten. Ich war bis vor kurzem *schrecklich bedrückt* und lebensmüde, jetzt aber bin ich etwas hoffnungsvoller und jetzt hoffe ich auch, daß wir uns wiedersehen werden.

Gott mit Dir! Und sei herzlichst gegrüßt von Deinem

treuen

Ludwig Wittgenstein

Meine Adresse ist:

L.W. Lehrer,
Trattenbach bei Kirchberg am Wechsel
Nieder-Österreich

Peking – Russell had gone to China early in the autumn of 1920; he returned to England at the end of August 1921.

English Translation

Dear Russell,

Thank you for your kind letter. I have now obtained a position: I am to be an elementary-school teacher in a tiny village called Trattenbach. It's in the mountains, about four hours' journey south of Vienna. It must be the first time that the schoolmaster at Trattenbach has ever corresponded with a professor in Peking. How are you? And what are you lecturing on? Philosophy? If so, I wish I could attend and could argue with you afterwards. A short while ago I was *terribly depressed* and tired of living, but now I am slightly more hopeful, and one of the things I hope is that we'll meet again.

God be with you! Warmest regards from

Your devoted friend

Ludwig Wittgenstein

My address is:

L.W. Schoolmaster
Trattenbach bei Kirchberg am Wechsel
Nieder-Österreich

1921

87. From B. Russell, 11.2.1921

Government University,
Peking
11.2.1921

My dear Wittgenstein,

I have been meaning to write you, ever since I got your letter of Sep. 20, which it gave me real happiness to get. I wonder how you like being an elementary school-teacher and how you get on with the boys. It is honest work, perhaps as honest as there is, and everybody now-a-days is engaged in some form of humbug, which you escape from.

I like China and the Chinese – they are lazy, good-natured, fond of laughter, very like nice children – they are very kind and nice to me. All the nations set upon them and say they mustn't be allowed to enjoy life in their own way – They will be forced to develop an army and navy, to dig up their coal and smelt their iron, whereas what they want to do is to make verses and paint pictures (very beautiful) and make strange music, exquisite but almost inaudible, on many-stringed instruments with green tassels. Miss Black and I live in a Chinese house, built around a courtyard: I send you a picture of me at the door of my study. My students are all Bolsheviks, because that is the fashion; they are annoyed with me for not being more of a Bolshevik myself. They are not advanced enough for mathematical logic. I lecture to them on Psychology, Philosophy, Politics and Einstein. Once in a way I have them to an evening party and they let off fire-works in the courtyard – they like this better than lectures. – I leave China in July, spend a month in Japan, and then come back to London – 70 Overstrand Mansions, S.W. 11, will always find me.

Miss Black sends all sorts of messages. Best love, my dear Ludwig – I shall hope to see you again, perhaps next year. I suppose by then it will be possible to travel to Trattenbach. Be as happy as you can!

Ever yours affectionately
Bertrand Russell

your letter of Sep. 20 – **86**.

Miss Black – Dora Black, who had been at The Hague with Russell and whom Russell married after their return from the journey to China. See also **89** and **90**.

88. From B. Russell, 3.6.1921

Government University
Peking.
3 June 1921

Dear Wittgenstein

Your letter of the 2nd April reached me yesterday.

Your manuscript is quite safe. I left it in England in the hopes of getting it printed, I do not know with what success. It is in the hands of Miss Wrinch of Girton, who is a good mathematician and a student of mathematical logic.

I am sorry you find the people in your neighbourhood so disagreeable. I don't think average human nature is up to much anywhere, and I dare say wherever you were you would find your neighbours equally obnoxious.

I have been in bed for the last ten weeks with a severe illness, but am now nearly well, and am returning to England this summer, so address there if you write again.

I am determined to get your manuscript published, and if it has not been achieved during my absence, I will take the matter in hand as soon as I return.

I wish you could come to England some time and pay me a visit, but I suppose that would be very difficult for you. I shall have to come to Trattenbach which, from the picture, looks quite a pretty place.

Best love, my dear Wittgenstein

Yours ever,
Bertrand Russell

letter of the 2nd April – This letter is lost. It evidently enclosed a picture postcard of Trattenbach.

Miss Wrinch – On her share in the publication history of the *Tractatus* see **90**.

89. To B. Russell, 23.10.1921

23.10.21.

Lieber Russell!

Verzeih, daß ich Dir erst jetzt auf Deinen Brief aus China antworte. Ich habe ihn sehr verspätet erhalten. Er traf mich nicht in Trattenbach und wurde mir an verschiedene Orte nachgeschickt, ohne mich zu erreichen – Es tut mir sehr leid, daß Du krank warst; und gar schwer! *Wie geht es denn jetzt?*! Bei mir hat sich nichts verändert. Ich bin noch immer in Trattenbach und bin nach wie vor von Gehässigkeit und Gemeinheit umgeben. Es ist wahr, daß die Menschen im Durchschnitt nirgends sehr viel wert sind; aber hier sind sie viel mehr als anderswo nichtsnutzig und unverantwortlich. Ich werde vielleicht noch dieses Jahr in Trattenbach bleiben, aber länger wohl nicht, da ich mich hier auch mit den übrigen Lehrern nicht gut vertrage. (Vielleicht wird das wo anders auch nicht besser sein.) Ja, *das wäre schön*, wenn Du mich einmal besuchen wolltest. Ich bin froh zu hören, daß mein Manuskript in Sicherheit ist. Wenn es gedruckt wird, wird's mir auch recht sein. –

Schreib mir bald ein paar Zeilen, wie es Dir geht, etc., etc.

Sei herzlich gegrüßt

von Deinem treuen

Ludwig Wittgenstein

Empfiehl mich der Miss Black.

English Translation

Dear Russell,

Forgive me for only now answering your letter from China. I got it after a very long delay. I wasn't in Trattenbach when it arrived and it was forwarded to several places before it reached me. – I am very sorry that you have been ill – and seriously ill! *How are you now, then?* As regards me, nothing has changed. I am still at Trattenbach, surrounded, as ever, by odiousness and baseness. I know that human beings on the average are not worth much anywhere, but here they are much more good-for-nothing and irresponsible than elsewhere. I will perhaps stay on in Trattenbach for the present year but probably not any longer, because I don't get on well here even with the other teachers (perhaps that won't be better in another place). Yes, *it would be splendid* if you would visit me sometime. I am glad to hear that my manuscript is in safety. And if it's printed, that will suit me too. –

Write me a few lines soon, to say how you are, etc., etc.

Warmest regards from

your devoted friend

Ludwig Wittgenstein

Remember me to Miss Black.

90. From B. Russell, 5.11.1921

(Permanent Address)
31 Sydney Street
London S.W.3
5.11.21

My dear Wittgenstein,

I was very glad to hear from you. First, I have to tell you about your MS. As you know, I left it to Miss Wrinch to deal with while I was in China. After various failures, she got it accepted by Ostwald for his Annalen der Naturphilosophie; the proofs have just come, and I suppose it will be published in about 2 months. I had thought she was only going to try English publishers, so I left her my introduction, which Ostwald is also printing. I am sorry, as I am afraid you won't like that, but as you will see from his letter, it can't be helped. It is also going to appear in English in a new philosophical library published by Kegan Paul, but probably that won't be for nearly a year. In English it will appear as a separate book. This is due to Ogden (of the Cambridge Mag[azine].) who has taken a lot of trouble about it.

As for me, I am now married to Miss Black, and expecting a child in a few days. We have bought this house, and got your furniture from Cambridge, which we like *very* much. The child will probably be born in your bed. There were a great many books of yours, as well as various boxes and parcels from engineering firms which you had never opened. If ever you come to see us, I will give you back any of your books that you may want. Your things are worth much more than I paid for them, and I will pay you more whenever you like. I didn't know when I bought them how much I was getting. In particular, if you could ever manage to come to England, you must let me pay the expenses of your journey as further payment for your furniture. I do wish you would come – the prospective child will make it a little more difficult for me to travel. I am quite well again now. I forget whether I told you that in Peking I was in the German hospital, and looked after by German Doctors. They were wonderfully skilled and kind and careful, and one of them, Dr. Esser, became a great friend of us both. I also made friends with an Austrian named Brandauer, who knew you by name. He had been a prisoner in Siberia.

I am very sorry you find the people of Trattenbach so trying. But I refuse to believe they are worse than the rest of the human race; my logical instinct revolts against the notion.

Do consider seriously coming to see us whenever you have long enough holidays. Best love, as always.

Yours ever
Bertrand Russell

For the early publication history of the *Tractatus* see McGuinness, *Young Ludwig*, pp. 296–9.

Ostwald – Wilhelm Ostwald (1853–1932), physical chemist, publisher of a series of scientific classics and something of a crank (see **91**).

Ogden – C. K. Ogden (1889–1957), editor and student of language in general, founded the *Cambridge Magazine* in 1912. For his part in the publication of the *Tractatus* see L. Wittgenstein, *Letters to C. K. Ogden with Comments on the English Translation: Tractatus Logico Philosophicus*, ed. G. H. von Wright (Oxford: Blackwell, 1973).

91. To B. Russell, 28.11.1921

28.11.21.

Lieber Russell!

Dank Dir vielmals für Deinen lieben Brief. Ehrlich gestanden: es freut mich, daß mein Zeug gedruckt wird. Wenn auch der Ostwald ein Erzscharlatan ist! Wenn er es nur nicht verstümmelt! Liest Du die Korrekturen? Dann bitte sei so lieb und gib acht, daß er es genau so druckt, wie es bei mir steht. Ich traue dem Ostwald zu, daß er die Arbeit nach seinem Geschmack, etwa nach seiner blödsinnigen Orthographie, verändert. Am liebsten ist es mir, daß die Sache in England erscheint. Möge sie der vielen Mühe die Du und andere mit ihr hatten würdig sein! –

Du hast recht: nicht die Trattenbacher allein sind schlechter, als alle übrigen Menschen; wohl aber ist Trattenbach ein besonders minderwertiger Ort in Österreich und die *Österreicher* sind – seit dem Krieg – bodenlos tief gesunken, daß es zu traurig ist, davon zu reden! So ist es. – Wenn Du diese Zeilen kriegst, ist vielleicht schon Dein Kind auf dieser merkwürdigen Welt. Also: ich gratuliere Dir und Deiner Frau herzlichst. Verzeih' daß ich so lange nicht geschrieben habe; auch ich bin etwas kränklich und riesig beschäftigt. Bitte schreibe wieder einmal wenn Du Zeit hast. Von Ostwald habe ich keinen Brief erhalten. Wenn alles gut geht werde ich Dich mit tausend Freuden besuchen!

Herzlichste Grüße,

Dein

Ludwig Wittgenstein

seiner blödsinnigen Orthographie / his stupid spelling – Wilhelm Ostwald, a distinguished chemist, both practical and theoretical, had many other interests, including that of reducing physics to "energetics", dispensing with the concept of mass. He promoted the history and philosophy of science (hence the periodical that harboured Wittgenstein's *Abhandlung*) and also advocated phonetic spelling (in this like Boltzmann). Russell's introduction was for him sufficient recommendation of Wittgenstein's treatise.

English Translation

Dear Russell,

Many thanks for your kind letter! I must admit I am pleased that my stuff is going to be printed. Even though Ostwald is an utter charlatan. As long as he doesn't tamper with it! Are you going to read the proofs? If so, please take care that he prints it exactly as I have it. He is quite capable of altering the work to suit his own tastes – putting it into his idiotic spelling, for example. What pleases me most is that the whole thing is going to appear in England. I hope it may be worth all the trouble that you and others have taken with it. You are right: the Trattenbachers are not uniquely worse than the rest of the human race. But Trattenbach is a particularly insignificant place in Austria and the *Austrians* have sunk so miserably low since the war that it's too dismal to talk about. That's how it is. – By the time you get this letter your child will perhaps already have come into this remarkable world. So: warmest congratulations

to you and your wife! Forgive me for not having written to you for so long. I too haven't been very well and I've been tremendously busy. Please write again when you have time. I have not had a letter from Ostwald. If all goes well, I will come and visit you with the greatest of pleasure.

Warmest regards,

Yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

92. From B. Russell, 24.12.1921

31 Sydney Str.
London S.W.3
24.12.21

Dear Wittgenstein

Thanks for your letter. Ostwald had already printed before I saw the proofs – I think it must be out by now. Ogden has done all the business, and is going ahead with getting your work published in English. The publication is all arranged for. The publisher will be Kegan Paul. The translation is being done by two young men at Cambridge who know mathematical logic, and I am telling them all that you and I agreed on as regards translations of terms. What I saw of Ostwald's stuff was all right, and not in his "insane" orthography. In the English publication, we are trying to get the German text also printed, but I am not sure whether the publisher will agree.

Our boy was born on Nov. 16, and flourishes. He is called John Conrad (the latter after the novelist of that name, who is a friend of mine). My wife is now quite recovered and we are both very happy.

I am very sorry to hear you are not well. Remember that we shall both be overjoyed if you can ever come to see us, and that it will be easy to pay all your expenses by selling a few of your things which are of no use to me. Your property was worth much more than Jolley pretended. Your books alone were worth £100, and I don't see why I should swindle you because Jolley understated the value of your things. £300 would have been a fair price. I will send you the extra £200 if you will accept it, or give you back anything of yours that you want when you come, whichever you prefer.

Best wishes for the New Year, and much love.

Yrs ever
Bertrand Russell

two young men – One was F. P. Ramsey. Who the other was remains uncertain. Perhaps Russell wrongly supposed that R. B. Braithwaite (1900–90, scholar, later Fellow of King's College, Cambridge and still later holder of the Knightbridge Chair of Moral Philosophy), who in fact knew little German at that time, was going to assist with the translation. While C. K. Ogden, who always speaks of "translators" in the plural, clearly took many of the final decisions and discussed them with Wittgenstein, it is probably inaccurate to refer to him as the translator of the work. It has, of course, long been clear, and these letters of Russell's make it additionally so, that Ogden deserves great credit for ensuring the work's publication.

Jolley understated the value – Wittgenstein's reaction to the offers made by Russell is unknown except that **93** shows him willing to let Russell pay for his expenses in connection with a planned meeting.

1922

93. From B. Russell, 7.2.1922

31 Sydney Street S.W.3
7.2.22

Dear Wittgenstein

I was very glad to get your letter the other day, with your nice message to the little boy, which, as you suggested, I conveyed by appropriate symbols other than words. He flourishes, and gives us both great happiness.

I wonder you haven't heard from Ostwald. Have you written to him to tell him your address? If not, I don't suppose he knows it. I have heard nothing further about publication of your book, either here or in Germany, but I will find out next time I see Ogden.

We intend to go to Germany and Switzerland next August. If you have holidays then, I hope we could see you then – it would be easier for you, I suppose, than coming to England. In Switzerland we intend to stay with my brother's wife, who used to be Gräfin Arnim. I am sure she would be delighted to have you too, if you could come. I am *very* glad you will let me pay your expenses. If you *can* come to England sooner, do.

I liked China much better than Europe – the people are more civilized – I keep wishing I were back there. I lectured to them on all sorts of topics, but what they liked best was mathematical logic.

I wish you didn't have to work so hard at elementary teaching – it must be very dreary. Would you like me to bring your journals and note-books when we next meet? Take care of yourself – With love,

Yours ever
Bertrand Russell

your letter – This letter is apparently lost.

your journals and note-books – See Wittgenstein's letter to Russell, 1 November 1919 (**69**). For Wittgenstein's reaction to Russell's question, see **94**.

94. To B. Russell, [1922]

Lieber Russell!

Dank' Dir für Dienen lieben Brief! Nein, von Ostwald habe ich noch nichts gehört. Ich dachte übrigens er wußte meine Adresse durch den der ihm mein Manuskript geschickt hat. Nun, das ist übrigens ganz gleichgültig wenn er die Geschichte nur überhaupt druckt und nicht zu viele Druckfehler hinein macht.

Ich bin in der letzten Zeit auch sehr niedergeschlagen. Nicht, daß mir das Lehren an der Volksschule zuwider ist. Im Gegenteil! Aber SCHWER ist es, daß ich in diesem Lande Lehrer sein muß, wo die Menschen so ganz und gar hoffnungslos sind. Ich habe in diesem Ort nicht eine Seele mit der ich ein wirklich vernünftiges Wort sprechen könnte. Wie ich das auf die Dauer aushalten werde weiß Gott! Ich glaub' Dir's gern daß auch Du es in China schöner gefunden hast als in England obwohl es in England zweifellos noch tausendmal besser ist als bei uns. – Du weißt wie ich mich freuen würde Dich zu sehen. Wenn mich die Frau Deines Bruders aufnimmt komme ich mit Freuden zu Euch. Meine Tagebücher und Notizen verwende, bitte, zum einheizen. Wenn Du täglich 2–3 Blätter zum Feueranzünden benützt werden sie bald aufgebraucht sein und ich hoffe sie werden gut brennen. Also – weg damit! – Bitte empfiehl mich Deiner Frau und grüß den kleinen Buben. Und schreibe wieder einmal.

Deinem

L. Wittgenstein

P.S. Hast Du zufällig unter Deinen Büchern die "religiösen Streitschriften" von Lessing? Wenn ja so lies sie bitte! Ich glaube sie werden Dich interessieren und Dir gefallen. Ich liebe sie sehr! Dein L.W.

This is Wittgenstein's reply to **93**. It is undated.

Tagebucher und Notizen / journals and notebooks – We must assume that Russell finally complied with Wittgenstein's wish and destroyed this material.

English Translation

Dear Russell,

Thank you for your kind letter. No, I have not yet heard anything from Ostwald, though I did think he knew my address from the person who sent him my manuscript. But, anyway, that is completely unimportant, just as long as he really prints the thing and does not introduce too many misprints.

I have been very depressed in recent times too. Not that I find teaching in the elementary school distasteful: quite the contrary. But what's HARD is that I have to be a teacher in this country where people are so completely and utterly without hope. In this place I have not a single soul with whom I could talk in a really sensible way. How I shall support that in the long run, God knows! I readily believe that you too found things better in China than in England, though England still is without a doubt a thousand times better than here where I am. –

You know how happy I should be to see you. If your brother's wife will have me I will gladly come to see you all. Please use my journals and notebooks for kindling. If you take 2 or 3 pages a day to light the fire, they will soon be used up, and I hope they burn well. Away with them, I say! Please remember me to your wife and give my greetings to the little boy. And write another letter to

Your

L. Wittgenstein

P.S. Do you happen to have among your books the "Religious Controversies" of Lessing? If so, please read them. I think they will interest you and give you pleasure. I like them very much. Yours L.W.

95. From B. Russell, [9.5.1922]

Till July 25:
Sunny Bank, Treen, Penzance
31 Sydney Street
London S.W.3

Dear Wittgenstein,

I have heard from my brother's wife, and she will be delighted if you will come to her Chalet in Switzerland when we are there – about 8th to 20th of August, but I will let you know the exact date later – certainly 15th ±e. The address of her chalet is

Chalet Soleil, Randogne sur Sierre.

I have never been there, but I think it is above the Simplon railway, by a funicular. It will be a great happiness to see you again. My sister-in-law writes novels – they used to be all about Germany – "Elizabeth and her German garden" was the first. She used to live in Pommern. She has quarrelled with my brother, who is difficult as a husband.

Ogden is getting on with your book, which I gather he will print both in English and German. I suppose it will be out in October. I have never read Lessing's "religiöse Streitschriften" – I think they are among your books which I have in town – I will look when I get home. I am sorry you have such a depressing life. All Europe is horrible since the war, but I suppose it is worse in Austria than here. One gathers that England, Germany and Russia jointly are going to fight France – so it goes on.

The little boy is lovely – At first he looked exactly like Kant, but now he looks more like a baby – Best wishes from my wife. With love,

Yours ever
Bertrand Russell

my brother's wife – A letter of May 1922 to Russell from his sister-in-law is preserved which begins "I shall love to have Wittgenstein at the chalet". As far as is known Wittgenstein's visit to Switzerland did not come off. In August 1922, however, Russell and Wittgenstein met in Innsbruck.

96. To B. Russell, [November or December 1922]

Lieber Russell!

Schon lange habe ich von Dir nichts mehr gehört und Dir nicht mehr geschrieben, und heute schreibe ich Dir hauptsächlich, weil ich ein Anliegen an Dich habe: Ich will Dich, wie man bei uns sagt "anpumpen". Wie Du weißt ist mein Buch vor ein paar Wochen erschienen. Ich habe vom Verlag 3 Exemplare gekriegt, möchte aber noch 3 haben, da ich es noch einigen Leuten schenken soll. Würdest Du nun die Güte haben und mir 3 Exemplare kaufen und schicken? Das Geld dafür werde ich Dir dann schicken, aber vielleicht nicht auf einmal, sondern ratenweise, wenn ich nur erst weiß, wie ich es machen kann. Zu Weihnachten werde ich mich in Wien darüber erkundigen. Natürlich gilt meine Bitte nur für den Fall, daß Dir die Auslage GAR KEINE Schwierigkeiten macht; denn die Angelegenheit ist ja nicht *sehr* wichtig. Im Falle, daß Du die Bücher besorgen kannst wäre es mir am liebsten Du tätest es recht bald! – Ich bin jetzt in einem anderen Nest, wo es freilich auch nicht besser ist als in dem Vorigen. Es ist schwer mit den Menschen zu leben! Aber es sind ja eigentlich gar keine Menschen sondern 1/4 Tiere und 3/4 Menschen.

Schreib mir bald; auch wie es Dir geht.

Grüße Deine liebe Frau herzlich von mir.

Dein treuer
Ludwig Wittgenstein

Meine Addresse ist:

L.W. bei Frau Ehrbar
Puchberg am Schneeberg
Nieder-Österreich

vor ein paar Wochen erschienen / appeared a few weeks ago – The book was published by Kegan Paul in November. The letter, which is undated, must be from November or December 1922.

English Translation

Dear Russell,

It is a long time since I have heard from you or written to you and today I am writing chiefly because I have a favour to ask of you: I want (as we say here) "to put the bite on you". As you know my book appeared a few weeks ago. I have had 3 copies from the publisher, but should like another 3 copies because there are more people whom I need to present copies to. Would you very kindly buy three copies and send them to me? The money for them I will send you later, probably not all at once, but in instalments, as soon as I know how I can manage it. I will find out about that in Vienna at Christmas. Obviously the request only holds good as long as the outlay does not cause you any difficulties AT ALL, because the matter is not *very* important. If you really can get me the books, the best thing for me would be if you

could do it straightaway! – I am now in another hole, though, I have to say, it is no better than the old one. Living with human beings is hard! Only they are not really human, but rather 1/4 animal and 3/4 human.

Do write soon, also to tell me how things are with you.

Give my very best wishes to your wife.

Yours ever

Ludwig Wittgenstein

My address is:

L.W. c/o Frau Ehrbar
Puchberg am Schneeberg
Lower Austria

1923

97. To B. Russell, 7.4.1923

7.4.23
Puchberg am Schneeberg, N.Ö.

Lieber Russell!

Ich habe lange nichts mehr von Dir gehört und auch nicht geschrieben weil es wenig neues gibt und auch weil ich etwas krank war. Meine Nerven sind durch die Arbeit und viele Aufregung recht herunter gekommen und oft fürchte ich, daß sie es nicht bis zu den Ferien aushalten werden. – Vor kurzer Zeit erhielt' ich "The Meaning of Meaning". Gewiß ist es auch Dir geschickt worden. Ist das nicht ein miserables Buch?! Nein, so leicht ist die Philosophie doch nicht! Dafür sieht man aber, wie leicht es ist, ein dickes Buch zu schreiben. Das ärgste ist die Einleitung des Professor Postgate Litt.D. F.B.A. etc. etc., Etwas so albernes habe ich selten gelesen. – Ein wenig neugierig bin ich auf Ritchies Buch, das er mir schicken will (wie mir Ogden schreibt). Ritchie war ein netter Mensch und ich würde mich freuen von ihm zu hören.

Schreib auch Du wieder einmal, wie es Euch allen geht und was Dein kleiner Bub macht; ob er schon fleißig Logik studiert. Sei herzlich gegrüßt und grüße auch Deine liebe Frau

von Deinem

Ludwig Wittgenstein

"*The Meaning of Meaning*" – By C. K. Ogden and I. A. Richards, published by Kegan Paul in 1923.

Postgate – J. P. Postgate (1853–1926), classical scholar, who also permitted himself some remarks on the relations between language and reality. His preface was dropped from subsequent editions of *The Meaning of Meaning*. At the time of this letter he was in retirement in Cambridge from the Professorship of Latin at the University of Liverpool.

Ritchie – A. D. Ritchie (1892–1967), physiologist and philosopher, then Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, later Professor of Logic and Metaphysics at Edinburgh. The book referred to is evidently *Scientific Method*, published by Kegan Paul in the same series as the *Tractatus* and *The Meaning of Meaning*.

English Translation

Dear Russell,

I have not heard anything more from you for a long time and I have also not written, because there was little that was new and also because I have been rather unwell. The work and all the excitement have got my nerves completely down and I am often afraid that I shall not be able to hold out until the holidays. –

A short time ago I received "The Meaning of Meaning". Doubtless it has been sent to you too. Is it not a miserable book?! No, no, philosophy, after all, is not as easy as that! But it does show how easy it is to write a thick book. The worst thing is the Introduction by Professor Postgate, Litt.D., F.B.A., etc. etc. I have rarely read anything so stupid –

I am a bit curious about Ritchie's book, which he means to send me (so Ogden writes). Ritchie was a nice person and I should be happy to hear from him.

Now it is for you to write me another letter telling me how things are going for you and yours and what your little boy is doing. Is he already a keen student of logic? Warmest greetings to you with messages also to your wife,

Yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

98. To J. M. Keynes, [April 1923]

Dear Keynes!

Thanks so much for sending me the "Reconstruction in Europe". I should have preferred though to have got a line from you personally, saying how you are getting on, etc. Or, are you too busy to write letters? I don't suppose you are. Do you ever see Johnson? If so, please give him my love. I should so much like to hear from him too (not about my book but about himself).

So do write to me sometime, if you will condescend to do such a thing.

Yours sincerely

Ludwig Wittgenstein

Reconstruction in Europe – Published in the *Manchester Guardian Commercial* for 18 May 1922 and also as a series at the beginning of 1923. Wittgenstein thanks Ogden for sending it to him in March. Keynes's reply to the present letter came in March 1924 (**105**).

99. To F. P. Ramsey, [1923]

Dear Mr. Ramsey,

I've got a letter from Mr Ogden the other day saying that you may possibly come to Vienna in one of these next months. Now as you have so excellently translated the Tractatus into English I have no doubt you will be able to translate a letter too and therefore I am going to write the rest of this one in German.

This is a draft of the English section of a lost letter, no doubt in answer to a proposed visit by Ramsey, who was to go to Austria in the Long Vacation (summer) of 1923. Ramsey in fact came to see Wittgenstein at Puchberg in September 1923 and stayed for a couple of weeks. During that time they spent several hours each day reading the *Tractatus*, with Wittgenstein explaining his thoughts to Ramsey. In the course of these discussions Wittgenstein also made a number of changes and corrections in the English translation and some in the German text. They were all written down in Ramsey's copy of the book, where they can still be studied. They are described by C. Lewy, "A Note on the Text of the Tractatus", *Mind* 76 (1967), 417–23.

Ramsey has given a vivid account of his encounter with Wittgenstein in two letters which are preserved. The one was to John Maynard Keynes, the other to Ramsey's mother. The relevant passages from the letter to his mother, dated Puchberg am Schneeberg, 20 September 1923, read as follows:

> Wittgenstein is a teacher in the Village school. He is very poor, at least he lives economically. He has one tiny room whitewashed, containing a bed, washstand, small table and one hard chair and that is all there is room for. His evening meal which I shared last night is rather unpleasant coarse bread butter and cocoa. His school hours are 8 to 12 or 1 and he seems to be free all the afternoon.
>
> He looks younger than he can possibly be; but he says he has bad eyes and a cold. But his general appearance is athletic. In explaining his philosophy he is excited and makes vigorous gestures but relieves the tension by a charming laugh. He has blue eyes.
>
> He is prepared to give 4 or 5 hours a day to explaining his book. I have had two days and got through 7 (+ incidental forward references) out of 80 pages. And when the book is done I shall try to pump him for ideas for its further development which I shall attempt. He says he himself will do nothing more, not because he is bored, but because his mind is no longer flexible. He says no one can do more than 5 or 10 years work at philosophy. (His book took 7). And he is sure Russell will do nothing more important. His idea of his book is not that anyone by reading it will understand his ideas, but that some day someone will think them out again for himself, and will derive real pleasure from finding in this book their exact expressions. I think he exaggerates his own verbal inspiration, it is much more careful than I supposed but I think it reflects the way the ideas came to him which might not be the same with another man.
>
> He has already answered my chief difficulty which I have puzzled over for a year and given up in despair myself and decided he had not seen. (It is not in the 1st 7 pages but arose by the way.) He is great. I used to think Moore a great man but beside W!
>
> He says I shall forget everything he explains in a few days; Moore in Norway said he understood W completely and when he got back to England was no wiser than when he started.
>
> It's terrible when he says "Is that clear" and I say "no" and he says "Damn it's *horrid* to go through that again". Sometimes he says, I can't see that now [—] we must leave it. He often forgot the meaning of what he wrote within 5 minutes, and then remembered it later. Some of his sentences are intentionally ambiguous having an ordinary meaning and a more difficult meaning which he also believes.
>
> He is, I can see, a little annoyed that Russell is doing a new edition of Principia because he thought he had shown R that it was so wrong that a new edition would be futile. It must be done altogether afresh. He had a week with Russell 4 y[ea]rs ago.

Ramsey also sent a postcard to Ogden:

> L.W. explains his book to me from 2–7 every day. It is most illuminating; he seems to enjoy this and as we get on about a page an hour I shall probably stay here a fortnight or more. He is very interested in it, though he says that his mind is no longer flexible and he can never write another book. He teaches in the village school from 8 to 12 or 1. He is very poor and seems to lead a very dreary life having only one friend here [Rudolf Koder, then school-teacher at Puchberg, life-long friend of Wittgenstein's, Ed.], and being regarded by most of his colleagues as a little mad.
>
> F.P.R.

The "week with Russell" referred to seems to have been the meeting at the Hague in December 1919 (see **75** and comments), which suggests that the meeting in Innsbruck in August 1922 (see notes to **95**) did not occasion serious discussion.

100. From F. P. Ramsey, 15.10.1923

Trinity
15 October 1923

Dear Wittgenstein,

I had a letter the other day from the waiter in the hotel at Puchberg, containing a bill I had not paid. (It was hardly my fault as the proprietor's son assured me I had paid everything). I sent him a cheque, but I'm afraid he may have some difficulty in cashing it. Would you be so good as to see if it is all right, and if not, let me know and explain the difficulty so that I can solve it if possible by some other method of payment? I'm sorry to trouble you but I don't think it will be much trouble as my cheque ought to do, if he waits till the bank has sent it over here.

I haven't seen Keynes yet to ask him about your degree.

I went to Salome at the Opera in Vienna; it was most beautifully staged and I entirely agree about the Opera House. I stayed in Vienna 3 days and enjoyed myself looking at pictures and buildings.

I haven't started work on numbers yet as I have been busy preparing stuff to teach my women pupils. They pretend to understand more than I expected; but whether they do really, I don't know.

I am sending you my other copy of Tractatus at the same time as this letter.

Russell and his wife have just produced a book on "The Prospects of Industrial Civilisation" and he alone one called "The A.B.C. of the Atom"!

I have been talking to a man who knows Baron von Schrenck Notzing; he had seen the materialization happening and taken photographs of it which he showed to me; they were astonishing. He is very smart and has detected a lot of very clever frauds but he is sure these things are genuine.

I am afraid the fare from Vienna to London is rather more than I thought. My ticket was K1,940,000.

I haven't yet found myself out in having forgotten anything you explained to me.

Yours ever
Frank Ramsey

In this letter and the following one (**101**) Wittgenstein seems to have underlined one or two words or phrases as a kind of *aide-mémoire*. These passages have not been italicized above (but see note on **102**).

degree – Clearly Wittgenstein wished to complete and have conferred the degree he was working for in 1913–14. See **41** above and **101** below.

Opera House in Vienna – A work of architecture of which Wittgenstein had a high opinion. See the reference to its architect in *Culture and Value*, ed. G. H. von Wright, rev. 2nd edn, trans. P. Winch (Oxford: Blackwell, 1980), p. 74, where he says that van der Null was a great architect in a bad period and so faced a different task from a great architect in a good period and could not be compared with one – as indeed ought to have been expected: we shouldn't be misled by the general term (*Begriffswort*, i.e. "great architect"). The translation provided in the 1980 edition is unfortunately unintelligible.

my other copy of the Tractatus – For the work of Wittgenstein and Ramsey on the text and translation of this work, see **99** above and **107** below. The copy now sent is presumably "other" than the one marked up with their corrections.

"*The Prospects of Industrial Civilisation*" – Bertrand with Dora Russell, *The Prospects of Industrial Civilization* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1923).

"*The A.B.C. of the Atom*" – Bertrand Russell, *The ABC of Atoms* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner, 1923).

Schrenck Notzing – Albert von Schrenck-Notzing (1862–1929) was one of the first to apply the methods of natural science to the study of materialization and other parapsychological phenomena. These were much discussed in Vienna in the 1920s – particularly by members of the Vienna Circle (see Menger, *Reminiscences of the Vienna Circle*, p. 59) and figure from time to time in Wittgenstein's correspondence.

He is very smart – Presumably Ramsey meant the man to whom he talked.

101. From F. P. Ramsey, 11.11.1923

Trinity
11 November 1923

Dear Wittgenstein,

Thanks for your letter.

I have good news for you. If you will pay a visit to England, there is £50 (= K16,000,000) available to pay your expenses. So do, please, come. I imagine you would prefer to come in your summer holiday, which I think you said was July and August. The disadvantage of that time is that it is vacation in Cambridge, and the time when people in England take their holidays, so that the people you would like to see might be scattered all over the place. It occurred to me that if, as you said was possible, you were leaving your present school at the end of the academic year, you might perhaps leave two months earlier, and come to England for May and June, or longer, or part of those months. The Cambridge summer term is April 22nd to June 13th.

I asked Keynes about your degree, and the position seems to be this. The regulations have changed so that it is no longer possible to obtain a B.A. by keeping six terms and submitting a thesis. Instead you can obtain a Ph.D. by 3 years and a thesis. If you could come here for another year, you could probably get permission to count your two previous years and so obtain a Ph.D. But that is the only possibility.

I have not been doing much towards reconstructing mathematics; partly because I have been reading miscellaneous things, a little Relativity and a little Kant, and Frege. I do agree that Frege is wonderful; I enjoyed his critique of the theory of irrationals in the Grundgesetze enormously. I should like to read Ueber die Zahlen des Herrn H. Schubert but haven't yet found a copy only this wonderful advertisement which I'm sure you would like to read again.

"Der Verfasser knüpft seine Betrachtungen an die Darstellung, die Herr Schubert in der Encyklopädie der mathematischen Wissenschaften von den Grundlagen der Arithmetik gegeben hat. Er entdeckt darin eine Methode und ein Prinzip, die vielleicht schon früher von anderen Forschern benutzt, aber, wie es scheint, noch nie als solche besonders in Auge gefasst und ausgesprochen worden sind; die Methode, störende Eigenschaften durch Absehen von ihnen zum Verschwinden zu bringen, und das Prinzip der Nicht-unterscheidung des Verschiedenen, wie der Verfasser es nennt, das mit sehr interessanten histrionalen Eigenschaften der Zahlen enge zusammenzuhängen scheint. Indem der Verfasser das Wesen dieser Methode und dieses Prinzips genau in Worte auszusprechen und ihre Tragweite in helles Licht zu setzen sucht, glaubt er den Weg für weiter unabsehbare Fortschritte gebahnt zu haben."

But I am awfully idle; and most of my energy has been absorbed since January by an unhappy passion for a married woman, which produced such psychological disorder, that I nearly resorted to psychoanalysis, and should probably have gone at Christmas to live in Vienna for 9 months and be analysed, had not I suddenly got better a fortnight ago, since when I have been happy and done a fair amount of work.

I think I have solved all problems about finite integers, except such as are connected with the axiom of infinity, but I may well be wrong. But it seems to me too

difficult to discuss by post, except that perhaps when I get an account of it written out I will send it to you. I wish you were here; do come in the Summer. Have you noticed the difficulty in expressing without = what Russell expresses by $(\exists x) : fx.x \neq a$?

I am reading The Brothers Karamazov, I think the scene described by Ivan between Christ and the Inquisitor is magnificent.

Yours ever
F. P. Ramsey

Has Ogden sent you my review of Tractatus in Mind? if not, and you would like it I will send it to you, but it is not at all good and you must remember I wrote it before coming to see you.

critique of the theory of irrationals in the Grundgesetze – Volume 2, III.1 §§55–164 Kritik der Lehren von den Irrationalzahlen. Partially translated in *Translations from the Philosophical Writings of Gottlob Frege*, ed. P. T. Geach and M. Black (Oxford: Blackwell, 1952), pp.159ff.

advertisement – This reproduces some of the sarcasms of the Preface, as printed in G. Frege, *Collected Papers*, ed. B. McGuinness (Oxford: Blackwell, 1984), pp. 249–51. A translation is given below.

my review – "*Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*" (Critical Notice), *Mind* 32 (1923), 465–78; repr. in Ramsey, *The Foundations of Mathematics* (London: Kegan Paul, 1931) but not in subsequent collections, and in I. M. Copi and R. M. Beard (eds), *Essays on Wittgenstein's Tractatus* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1966).

English Translation of the quotation from Frege

The author's reflections take as their starting-point the account of the foundations of arithmetic which Mr Schubert has given in the Encyclopaedia of the Mathematical Sciences. The author discovers there a method and a principle which perhaps have been used earlier by other investigators but, it seems, have never before been expressly studied and fully spelt out. This is the method of making distressing properties disappear by ignoring them and the principle of not distinguishing the different, as the author calls it, which appears to be intimately connected with interesting histrionic properties of numbers. By trying to give the essence of this method and this principle a precise formulation in words and to shed clear light on their scope, he thinks he has paved the way for as yet incalculable advances.

102. From F. P. Ramsey, 27.12.1923

27 December 1923

Dear Wittgenstein,

Thanks for your letter; I'm sorry you have been ill and depressed.

First, *the £50 belong to Keynes*. He asked me not to say so straight away because he was afraid you might be less likely to take it from him than from an unknown source, as he has never written to you. I can't understand why he hasn't written, nor can he explain, he says he must have some "complex" about it. *He speaks of you with warm affection and very much wants to see you again*. And also, apart from that, if you would like to come to England he would not like you to be unable to for want of money, of which he has plenty.

I quite understand your fear of not being fit for society, but you mustn't give it much weight. I could get lodgings in Cambridge and you need not see more of people than you like or feel able to. I can see that staying with people might be difficult as you would inevitably be with them such a lot, *but if you lived by yourself you could come into society gradually*.

I don't want you to take this as endorsing your fear of boring or annoying people, for I know *I myself want to see you awfully*, but I just want to say that if you have such a fear surely it would be all right if you were not staying with anyone but lived alone at first.

I don't know how long you could live here on the £50, but I am sure it would be long enough to make it worth while for you to come.

I think Frege is more read now; two great mathematicians *Hilbert and Weyl* have been writing on the *foundations of mathematics* and *pay compliments to Frege*, appear in fact to have appreciated him to some extent. His unpopularity would naturally go as the generation he criticized dies.

I was silly to think I had solved those problems. I'm always doing that and finding it a mare's nest. (Moore does the same.) I will write to you about it soon at length, but I am afraid you will think my difficulties silly. I didn't think there was a real difficulty about $\exists x : fx.x \neq a$ i.e. that it was *an objection to your theory of identity*, but I didn't see how to express it, because I was under the silly delusion that if an x and an a occurred in the same proposition the x could not take the value a. I had also a reason for wanting it not to be possible to express it. But I will try to explain it all in about a fortnight from now, because it ought to help me to get clearer about things, and you may be able to put me right and may be interested. If I had anything of importance to say you would, I know, be interested, but I don't think I have.

I have been trying a lot to prove a proposition in the Mengenlehre either $2^{\aleph_0} = \aleph_1$, or $2^{\aleph_0} \neq \aleph_1$, which it is no one knows but I have had no success.

I made the acquaintance of your nephew Stonborough, whom I like.

I hear Russell is going to America to lecture.

I do hope you are better and no longer depressed and exhausted and will come to England.

Yours ever

Frank Ramsey

Thanks for giving me the expression fa. ⊃. (∃x, y) . fx . fy : ~fa ⊃ (∃x)fx.

In this and the following letter from Ramsey (**103**) the underlining (represented here in print by italics) gives every sign of being not the sender's expression of emphasis but rather the recipient's expression of interest or appreciation. However it has been reproduced precisely for its interest as such. See also note on **100**.

"*complex*" – Invoked to explain Keynes's reluctance to answer **98** above; see also **103** and **105**.

proposition in the Mengenlehre – This proposition (and hence also its negation) were first proved to be independent of the axioms of Set Theory (*Mengenlehre*) by P. J. Cohen in 1963.

your nephew Stonborough – Thomas S., later Dr. Phil., elder son of Wittgenstein's sister Margaret, was at the time an undergraduate at Trinity College. Ramsey wrote to him also explaining Keynes's plans and wishes so that he might, if occasion offered, describe them to his uncle.

Russell going to America to lecture – This was planned for January and February 1924 but delayed by illness and Russell in fact arrived there on 1 April 1924 and gave popular lectures for nine weeks, the first of a series of such visits, which, he took some pleasure in avowing, were for the purpose of making money to support his family life and (later) his school: see Ronald Clark, *Life of Bertrand Russell*, p. 415, and Russell's *Autobiography*, vol. II, pp. 152ff.

the expression fa etc – In an unpublished paper on "Identity" Ramsey uses this expression, altering only the order of the main conjuncts, to say in Wittgenstein's notation (i.e. one without identity but with conventions to prevent distinct free variables taking the same value) what is said in the notation of *Principia Mathematica* by "(∃x): x ≠ a.fx" (roughly: something other than a has f). Providing this translation is the problem mentioned by Ramsey in **101**.

1924

103. From F. P. Ramsey, 20.2.1924

Trinity
20 February 1924

My dear Wittgenstein,

Thanks for your letter; except that I think you might enjoy it, I no longer want you to come here *this summer, because I am coming to Vienna*, for some and perhaps the whole of it! I can't say exactly when or for how long, but very likely, next month, so I shall hope to see you quite soon now.

This is for various reasons: I hope to settle permanently in Cambridge, but as I have always lived here, I want to go away for a time first, and have the chance now for six months. And if I live in Vienna I can learn German, and come and see you often, (unless you object) and *discuss my work with you*, which would be most helpful. Also *I have been very depressed* and done little work, and have *symptoms so closely resembling some of those described by Freud* that I shall probably *try to be psychoanalysed, for which Vienna would be very convenient*, and which would make me stay there the whole six months. *But I'm afraid you won't agree with this.*

Keynes still means to write to you; it really is a disease – his procrastination; but he doesn't (unlike me) take such disabilities so seriously as to go to Freud! He very much hopes you will come and see him.

I haven't seen *Johnson* for a long time but I am going to tea with his sister soon, and unless he is ill I will give him your love (last time I went there he was ill). *The third part of his Logic is to be published soon.* It deals with Causation.

I am so sorry you *are using up all your strength* struggling with your surroundings; *it must be terribly difficult with the other teachers.* Are you staying on in Puchberg? When I saw you, you *had some idea of leaving if it got too impossible, and becoming a gardener.*

I can't write about work, it is such an effort when my ideas are so vague, and I'm going to see you soon. Anyhow I have done little except, I think, made out the proper solution rather in detail of *some of the contradictions which made Russell's Theory of Types* unnecessarily complicated, and made him put in the Axiom of Reducibility. *I went to see Russell a few weeks ago*, and am reading the manuscript of the new stuff he is putting into the Principia. You *are quite right that it is of no importance*; all it really *amounts to is a clever proof of mathematical induction without using the axiom of reducibility*. There are no fundamental changes, identity just as it used to be. *I felt he was too old: he seemed to understand and say "yes" to each separate thing*, but it made no impression so that 3 minutes afterwards *he talked on his old lines. Of all your work he seems now to accept only this: that it is nonsense to put an adjective where a substantive ought to be which helps in his theory of types.*

He indignantly denied ever having said that vagueness is a characteristic of the physical world.

He has 2 children now and is very devoted to them. *I liked him very much*. He does not really think *The Meaning of Meaning* important, but he wants to help Ogden by

encouraging the sale of it. He wrote a review of it, from which the quotation you saw was taken, in a political weekly.

I had a *long discussion with Moore* the other day, who has *grasped more of your work than I should have expected.*

I'm sorry I'm not getting on better with the foundations of mathematics; I have got several ideas but they are still dim.

I hope you are well, and as happy as you can be under the circumstances. It gives me great pleasure that probably I shall see you soon.

Yours ever
Frank Ramsey

As announced here, Ramsey did in fact go to Vienna in March 1924 after the end of the Lent Term. He returned to Cambridge in time to take up his position as a Lecturer and a Fellow of King's at the beginning of Michaelmas Term. Most of the time he spent in Vienna, where he was being psychoanalysed. He dined regularly at the house of Wittgenstein's sister, Margaret Stonborough. We have evidence of four visits (in one case probably abortive), to Wittgenstein himself: in March, May, and July at Puchberg and in late September, just before going back to England, at Otterthal, the third and last of the villages in Lower Austria in which Wittgenstein worked as a schoolmaster. The first visit, which was within a week of his arrival, he describes to his mother as follows (letter of 30 March 1924):

> I stayed a night at Puchberg last weekend. Wittgenstein seems to me tired, though not ill; but it isn't really any good talking to him about work, he won't listen. If you suggest a question he won't listen to your answer but starts thinking of one for himself. And it is such hard work for him like pushing something too heavy uphill.

For the underlining (italics) in this letter, see note on **102**.

104. From F. P. Ramsey to J. M. Keynes, 24.3.1924

Wien 1
Mahlerstrasse 7
Tür 27
Austria
24/3/24

Dear Maynard,

The Puchberg address is right for Wittgenstein. I went to see him yesterday; he was very pleased to have your books, and sends you his love.

He also asked me to write to you about the possibility of his coming to England, because he is afraid he could not express himself adequately in English and you would not understand if he wrote in German. I think he could express himself all right but it would be a great effort and so I said I would try for him. He talked about it to Richard but does not trust Richard to report him faithfully.

He has definitely decided that he wouldn't like to come and stay in Cambridge. July and August are almost the only holiday he gets in the year, and he generally spends them living almost alone in Vienna contemplating. He prefers Vienna to Cambridge unless he has some special reason for going to Cambridge, which could only be to see people. The people in England he wants to see are few; Russell he can no longer talk to, Moore he had some misunderstanding with, and there really only remain you and Hardy, and perhaps Johnson whom he would just like to see, but obviously they wouldn't get on. I shan't be coming back to England till October.

To come to Cambridge and just go out to tea and see people, is, he thinks, not merely not worth while, but positively bad because such intercourse would merely distract him from his contemplation without offering any alternative good; because he feels that he couldn't get into touch with people, even you whom he likes very much, without some effort on both sides and unless he were to see them a good deal.

It comes to this: that, while he would like to stay with you in the country and try to get intimate with you again, he won't come to England just to have a pleasant time, because he would feel it so futile and not enjoy it.

I think he is right about this, but I feel it a pity too, because if he were got away from his surroundings and were not so tired, and had me to stimulate him, he might do some more very good work; and he might conceivably have come to England with that in view. But while he is teaching here I don't think he will do anything, his thinking is so obviously frightfully uphill work as if he were worn out. If I am here during his summer holiday I might try to stimulate him then.

So I'm afraid he won't come to England this year, nor can I advise him to, unless you would like to ask him to stay with you in the country, in which case he would come. (It occurred to him that that was what he would like to do; I didn't suggest it.)

I hope I have made his point of view clear, it is just the opposite of what I imagined. When he wrote that he was afraid of staying with anyone as he might find it difficult and be a bore, I at once thought he might nevertheless like to live alone and see people occasionally. But that he won't do as he thinks he would not understand the people he saw nor they him at once or at all, unless he saw them constantly, as he

would staying with them. On the other hand I think he has decided that it would be worth while trying, in spite of the chance of complete failure, if you were to ask him to stay with you.

I'm afraid I think you would find it difficult and exhausting. Though I like him very much I doubt if I could enjoy him for more than a day or two, unless I had my great interest in his work, which provides the mainstay of our conversation.

But I should be pleased if you did get him to come and see you, as it might possibly get him out of this groove.

Yours ever
Frank Ramsey

Richard – R. B. Braithwaite (see **92**).

105. From J. M. Keynes, 29.3.1924

46, Gordon Square
Bloomsbury
29 March 1924

My dear Wittgenstein,

A whole year has passed by and I have not replied to your letter. I am ashamed that this should have been so. But it was not for want of thinking about you and of feeling very much that I wanted to renew signs of friendship. The reason was that I wanted to try to understand your book thoroughly before writing to you; yet my mind is now so far from fundamental questions that it is impossible for me to get clear about such matters. I still do not know what to say about your book, except that I feel certain that it is a work of extraordinary importance and genius. Right or wrong, it dominates all fundamental discussions at Cambridge since it was written.

I have sent you in a separate package copies of the various books which I have written since the war. *Probability* is the completion of what I was doing before the war, – I fear you will not like it. Two books on the Peace Treaty, half economic and half political, a book on Monetary Reform (which is what I most think about just now).

I should like immensely to see and talk with you again. Is there a chance that you will pay a visit to England?

Yours truly and affectionately
J. M. Keynes

You may like to see the enclosed paper about a memorial to Pinsent.

I would do anything in my power which could make it easier for you to do further work.

various books – For *Probability* see comments on **58** and **61** above. The other books were: *The Economic Consequences of the Peace* (1919; see **106**), *A Revision of the Treaty* (1922), and *A Tract on Monetary Reform* (1923).

memorial to Pinsent – It is not known what was intended. There is a stone to Pinsent and his brother in the church at Dry Sandford, near Oxford, where his mother lived, but Cambridge friends are unlikely to have been involved in that.

106. To J. M. Keynes, 4.7.1924

Puchberg am Schneeberg
4.7.24.

My dear Keynes

Thanks awfully for sending me your books and for your letter dated 29./3. I have postponed writing to you so long because I could not make up my mind as to whether to write to you in English or in German. Writing in German makes things easy for me and difficult for you. On the other hand if I write in English I am afraid the whole business may become hopeless at MY end already. Whereas you might find somebody to translate a German letter to you. If I have said all I've got to say I'll end up in English.

Also: Zuerst möchte ich Ihnen noch einmal für die Bücher und Ihren lieben Brief danken. Da ich sehr beschäftigt bin und mein Gehirn für alles Wissenschaftliche ganz unaufnahmsfähig ist, so habe ich nur in *einem* der Bücher gelesen ("The economic consequences [of the peace]"). Es hat mich sehr interessiert, obwohl ich von dem Gegenstand natürlich so gut wie nichts verstehe. Sie schreiben, ob Sie etwas tun könnten, um mir wieder wissenschaftliches Arbeiten zu ermöglichen: Nein, in dieser Sache läßt sich nichts machen; denn ich habe selbst keinen starken inneren Trieb mehr zu solcher Beschäftigung. Alles was ich wirklich sagen mußte, habe ich gesagt und damit ist die Quelle vertrocknet. Das klingt sonderbar, aber es ist so. – Gerne, *sehr* gerne möchte ich Sie wiedersehen; und ich weiß, daß Sie so gut waren, mir Geld für einen Aufenthalt in England zuzusichern. Wenn ich aber denke, daß ich von Ihrer Güte nun wirklich Gebrauch machen soll, so kommen mir allerlei Bedenken: Was soll ich in England tun? Soll ich nur kommen um Sie zu sehen und mich auf alle mögliche Weise zu zerstreuen? I mean to say shall I just come to be nice? Now I don't think at all that it isn't worth while being nice – if only I could be REALLY nice – or having a nice time – if it were a VERY nice time indeed.

But staying in rooms and having tea with you every other day or so would not be *nice enough*. But then I should pay for this little niceness with the great disadvantage of seeing my short holidays vanish like a phantom without having the least profit – I don't mean money – or getting any satisfaction from them. Of course staying in Cambridge with you is much nicer than staying in Vienna alone. But in Vienna I can collect my thoughts a little and although they are not worth collecting they are better than mere distraction.

Now it wouldn't seem impossible that I could get more out of you than a cup of tea every other day that's to say that I could really profit from hearing you and talking to you and in this case it would be worth while coming over. But here again there are great difficulties: We haven't met since 11 years. I don't know if you have changed during that time, but *I* certainly have tremendously. I am sorry to say I am no better than I was, but I am *different*. And therefore if we shall meet you may find that the man who has come to see you isn't really the one you meant to invite. There is no doubt that, even if we *can* make ourselves understood to one another, a chat or two will *not* be sufficient for the purpose, and that the result of our meeting will be disappointment and disgust on your side and disgust and despair on mine. – Had

I any definite work to do in England and were it to sweep the streets or to clean anybody's boots I would come over with great pleasure and then nicety could come by itself in course.

There would be a lot more to say about the subject but it's too difficult to express it either in English or in German. So I'd better make an end. I thought when I began to write that I should write this letter altogether in German but, extraordinarily enough, it has proved more natural for me to write to you in broken English than in correct German.

Herzliche Grüße! Yours ever
Ludwig Wittgenstein

P.S. Please give my love to Johnson if you see him.

Another draft that we have agrees with the letter sent until Wittgenstein says:

> you might not find anybody to translate my letter. But now I thought I would have to try after all and write in English. Well: It was very kind indeed of you to invite me to stay in England during the summer. Now the absolute truth about the matter is this: 1) I should like very much to see you again. On the other hand 2) I'm afraid I shall probably disappoint you because I have changed so much since we met last. Especially I am no longer capable to do any good . . .

Here, at the end of the sheet, the draft as we have it breaks off. The text given here above is printed from the letter actually received by Keynes.

English Translation of German section

So: first I should like to thank you once again for the books and for your kind letter. Since I'm very busy and my brain is quite incapable of absorbing anything of a scientific character, I've only read parts of one of the books ("The economic consequences of the peace"). It interested me very much, though of course I understand practically nothing about the subject. You ask in your letter whether you could do anything to make it possible for me to return to scientific work. The answer is, No: there's nothing that can be done in that way, because I myself no longer have any strong inner drive towards that sort of activity. Everything that I really had to say, I have said, and so the spring has run dry. That sounds queer, but it's how things are. – I'd like – *very much* – to see you again and I know that you've been so kind as to guarantee me money for a stay in England. But when I think that I ought really to avail myself of your kindness, all sorts of misgivings occur to me; what am I to do in England? Shall I come just in order to see you and to amuse myself in every way possible?

107. From F. P. Ramsey, 15.9.1924

Mahlerstrasse 7/27
Wien I
15 September 1924

Dear Wittgenstein

I wonder if it would be convenient to you if I came to Puchberg to see you next week end ie the 20th. Please say frankly whether you would be bored or pleased to see me. I don't much want to talk about mathematics as I haven't been doing much lately.

I had a letter from Ogden with a large enclosure for you from an American business man, who patronisingly thinks your book not so bad and sends you some stuff of his own, which I will bring or send. There's nothing in it.

Ogden also asked me to get from you, if possible, while I was here any corrections in case there should be a second edition of your book. (This is not really likely.) I have got marked in my copy a lot of corrections we made to the translation, and 4 extra propositions you wrote in English. Obviously I think the corrections to the translation should be made in a new edition, and the only doubt is about the extra propositions; and also you might have something else you would like altered. But it isn't worth while taking much trouble about it yet as a second edition is unlikely. It is merely, I think, that Ogden thought that it might save possible future correspondence for us to talk about it now.

I am here till October 3rd. I don't know if I knew when I last saw you or told you that I have been made a fellow and lecturer in mathematics at King's starting with this coming term.

Yours ever
Frank Ramsey

Puchberg – With the new school year Wittgenstein had in fact moved to Otterthal.

corrections . . . extra propositions – The former were practically all inserted in the second impression (1933), the latter not: for both see the article by C. Lewy cited in comments on **99** above.

an American business man – Unknown.

108. From J. M. Keynes, 27.12.1924

27.12.24.
46, Gordon Square
Bloomsbury

My dear Wittgenstein

I was happy to get your letter of last July, and, though I was sorry you wouldn't come here, I agreed with your reasons, – I think that what you said is true. It is true that it would be no good on either side to meet in Cambridge *casually*. The only satisfactory way would be, if the conditions were such that conversation was unnecessary unless desired; – as for example, if you were to stay with me in the country when I was working (I generally take a house in August and September). Then perhaps you could work too, – and at any rate be just as morose as you might feel inclined, without upsetting anybody. Perhaps sometime under such conditions you will come?

Yours ever (with much feeling)
J. M. Keynes

1925

109. To J. M. Keynes, 8.7.1925

8.7.25.

Dear Keynes

Some weeks ago I got a letter from a friend of mine in Manchester inviting me to stay with him some time during my holidays. Now I'm not yet quite decided about whether I shall come or not but I should rather like to, if I could also see *you* during my stay (about the middle of August). Now please let me know FRANKLY if you have the slightest wish to see me. If you give me a negative answer I shan't mind in the least. Please write to me as *soon* as possible, as my holidays are rather short and I shall hardly have time enough to arrange for my journey.

Yours ever
Ludwig Wittgenstein

My address is:

L.W. bei Dr. Hänsel
Wien V., Kriehubergasse 25.

a friend of mine in Manchester – W. Eccles (see **33** above): Wittgenstein had written to him suggesting a visit on 7 May 1925 (see *Schriften*, vol. 4: *Briefe*, no. 175).

110. To J. M. Keynes, [July or August 1925]

Dear Keynes,

Thanks so much for your letter. I will come to London on the 16th at 10h 40 in the evening (via Boulogne-Folkestone). Please let me meet you in London as I don't like the idea of travelling about in England alone now. If you will send me some money for the journey I shall be very glad. I'm awfully curious how we are going to get on with one another. It will be exactly like a dream.

Yours ever

Ludwig Wittgenstein

111. To J. M. Keynes, 7.8.1925

7.8.25.

Dear Keynes

Thanks very much for your letter and the £10. I will travel by Dieppe–Newhaven as you suggest and shall arrive at Newhaven on Tuesday 18th in the morning by the boat which leaves Dieppe at midnight.

Auf Wiedersehen!

Yours ever

L. Wittgenstein

Arrival at Newhaven (in Sussex) enabled Wittgenstein to go directly (or more probably to be easily met and brought) to the house that Keynes with his newly married wife, Lydia Lopokova, had taken nearby. There, later the same day, Ramsey also came. Wittgenstein made further visits, to W. Eccles in Manchester and to Cambridge, to see W. E. Johnson, for whom he had a great fondness. Johnson wrote to Keynes on 24 August saying: "Tell Wittgenstein that I shall be very pleased to see him once more; but I must bargain that we don't talk on the foundations of Logic, as I am no longer equal to having my roots dug up."

112. To J. M. Keynes, 18.10.1925

18.10.25.

My dear Keynes,

Thanks so much for your letter! I am still teacher and don't want any money at present. I have decided to remain teacher, as long as I feel that the troubles into which I get that way, may do me any good. If one has toothache it is good to put a hot-water bottle on your face, but it will only be effective, as long as the heat of the bottle gives you some pain. I will chuck the bottle when I find that it no longer gives me the particular kind of pain which will do my character any good. That is, if people here don't turn me out before that time. If I leave off teaching I will probably come to England and look for a job there, because I am convinced that I cannot find anything at all possible in this country. In this case I will want your help.

Please remember me to your wife.

Yours ever
Ludwig

Give my love to Johnson, if you see him.

The letter reflects the difficulties of Wittgenstein's life as a schoolteacher. Finally, after a severe crisis inolving alleged maltreatment of a pupil, he resigned his post at the end of April 1926 and did not return to school-teaching.

1927

113. To F. P. Ramsey, 2.7.1927

Wien 2.7.1927

Dear Mr. Ramsey,

Prof. Schlick lent me your book, The foundations of Math. and asked me to give him my opinion about it. As I don't agree with one of your main points I told Prof. Schlick my objections and I think I ought to let you know them too; for I'm sure you would oblige Prof. Schlick greatly by writing to him your answer to my criticism. I will now try to explain my point.

You define x = y by

$$(\varphi_\varepsilon) :\varphi_\varepsilon x = \varphi_\varepsilon y \text{- - - - - - - - - - - - } Q(x,y)$$

and you justify this Definition by saying that Q(x, y) is a tautology whenever "x" and "y" have the same meaning, and a contradiction, when they have different meanings.

I will try to show that this definition won't do nor any other that tries to make x = y a tautology or a contradiction.

It is clear that Q(x, y) is a logical product. Let "a" and "b" be two names having different meanings. Then amongst the members of our product there will be some such that f(a) means p and f(b) means ~p. Let me call such a function a critical function f_k. Now although we know that "a" and "b" have different meanings, still to say that a = b cannot be nonsensical if a ≠ b is to have any sense. For if a = b were nonsensical the negative proposition, i.e. that they have the same meaning, would be nonsensical too, *for the negation of nonsense is nonsense*. Now let us suppose, wrongly, that a = b, then, by substituting a for b* in our logical product the critical function $f_k(a)$ becomes nonsensical (being ambiguous) and, consequently, the whole product too. On the other hand, let "c" and "d" be two names having the same meaning, then it is true that Q(c, d) becomes a tautology. But suppose now (wrongly) c ≠ d, Q(c, d) remains a tautology still, for there is no critical function in our product. And even if it could be supposed (which it cannot) that c = d; surely a critical function f_k (such that f_k means p[,]f_k (d) means ~p) cannot be supposed to exist, for the sign f_k in this case becomes meaningless. Therefore, if x = y were a tautology or a contradiction and correctly defined by Q(x, y), Q(a, b) would not be contradictory, but nonsensical (as this supposition, if it were the supposition that "a" and "b" had the same meaning, would make the critical function nonsensical). And therefore ~Q(a, b) would be nonsensical too, for the negation of nonsense is nonsense.

In the case of c and d, Q(c, d) remains tautologous, even if c and d could be supposed to be different (for in this case a critical function cannot even be supposed to exist).

I conclude: Q(x, y) is a very interesting function, but cannot be substituted for x = y.

The mistake becomes still clearer in its consequences, when you try to say "there is an individual". You are aware of the fact that the supposition of there being no individual makes

$$(\exists x).x = x \qquad E$$

"absolute nonsense". But if E is to say "there is an individual" ~E says: "there is no individual". Therefore from ~E follows that E is nonsense. Therefore ~E must be nonsense itself, and therefore again so must be E.

The case lies as before. E, according to your definition of the sign "=" may be a tautology right enough, but does not say "there is an individual". Perhaps you will answer: of course it does not say "there is an individual" but it *shows* what we really mean when we say "there is an individual". But this is not shown by E, but simply by the legitimate use of the symbol $(\exists x) \ldots$, and therefore just as well (and as badly) by the expression $\sim(\exists x).x = x$. The same, of course, applies to your expressions "there are at least two individuals" and so on.

That's all I've got to say. My objections are so very simple that I can hardly make myself believe that you haven't noticed and refuted those difficulties yourself. Still I can't help thinking that they are real difficulties.

Yours sincerely
L. Wittgenstein

* which must be legitimate if we have given a = b the right meaning

The first and last paragraphs of this letter are handwritten by Wittgenstein, the remainder is typed, with some manuscript alterations by Wittgenstein. The late Herbert Feigl recalled an occasion in his lodgings when Carnap typed a letter for Wittgenstein, presumably the present one. Among Friedrich Waismann's papers there was a carbon copy of this typed portion, naturally without the corrections. It is printed in F. Waismann, *Wittgenstein and the Vienna Circle*, ed. B. F. McGuinness, trans. with J. Schulte (Oxford: Blackwell, 1978), pp. 189ff. The coldness of this letter ("Mr." Ramsey, and the suggestion that a reply will be a favour to Schlick, not to Wittgenstein himself) is best explained by the reply that Ramsey did in fact send to Schlick (22 July 1927; see also comments on **114**). The following is the relevant passage:

> I had a letter the other day from Mr. Wittgenstein criticizing my paper "The Foundations of Mathematics" and suggesting that I should answer not to him but to you. I should perhaps explain what you may not have gathered from him, that last time we met we didn't part on very friendly terms, at least I thought he was very annoyed with me (for reasons not connected with logic) so that I did not even venture to send him a copy of my paper. I now hope very much that I have exaggerated this, and that he may perhaps be willing to discuss various questions about which I should like to consult him. But from the tone of his letter and the fact that he gave no address I am inclined to doubt it.

Prof. Schlick – Moritz Schlick (1882–1936), the centre and master of the Vienna Circle, attempted almost as early as Keynes to bring Wittgenstein back to philosophy. Among other things he introduced him to the group here mentioned. He was both much influenced and much esteemed by Wittgenstein.

your book – Actually an article with this title in *Proceedings of the London Mathematical Society*, ser. 2, 125: 5 (1925), 338–84; later reprinted in Ramsey's posthumous *The Foundations of Mathematics* (1931), *Foundations* (1978), and now *Philosophical Papers* (1990), where the passage objected to occurs on pp. 53, 204, and 216 respectively.

114. From F. P. Ramsey, [July–August 1927]

King's College
Cambridge

Dear Wittgenstein,

Thank you very much for sending me your criticism of my paper. I hope you don't mind my answering to you as well as to Prof. Schlick, because he won't know whether my answer is any good, I'm afraid (judging by his book *Allgemeine Erkenntnislehre* which contains some sad rubbish), (but he may have got clearer since then). I am very sorry not to have sent you my paper myself before, but I didn't like to because you were so annoyed with me when we were at Keynes', and I didn't think the paper would interest you much.

$$\text{Calling, as you do, } \varphi_\varepsilon, : \varphi_\varepsilon x \equiv \varphi_\varepsilon y, \qquad \text{Q(x,y)}$$

I say (1) Q(x, y) is a tautology whenever "x", "y" have the same meaning, and contradiction when they have different meanings.

$$\text{(2) that therefore we may define } x = y \,.\, =.\, Q(x, y) \qquad \text{Df.}$$

Now I gather you are not disputing (i); (or are you?) but saying that granting (i) the definition is wrong. If by that you mean that $Q(x, y)$ does not *say* that x and y are identical, I entirely agree. All I contend is that substituting $Q(x, y)$ for $x = y$ in general propositions in which x = y is part of the function generalized (in Russell's notation) will give the whole proposition the right sense.

Thus in the example on p. 351–2 of my paper.

$$(\exists\, m, n) : \hat{x}(\varphi\, x) \in m \,.\, \hat{x}\,(\psi\, x) \in n \,.\, m^2 = n^3 + 2$$

if we put for $m^2 = n^3 + 2$

$$Q(m^2 = n^3 + 2)$$

we shall get the right meaning for the whole proposition or (a more simple case)

$$(\exists x)\colon fx \,.\, x \neq a$$

means the same as $(\exists x)\colon fx \,.\, \sim Q(x, a)$.

So also $Q(x, a) \,.\vee.\, Q(x, b)$ defines a class whose only members are a and b [,] just as $x = a \,.\vee.\, x = b$ was used by Russell to.

If you admit $Q(x, y)$ as a legitimate symbol at all it seems to me this must be all right.

I also agree with what you say about $(\exists\, x) \,.\, x{=}x$, but don't feel so clear about $(\exists\, x, y) : x \neq y$ etc. because if we adopt the convention that "x", "y" may take the same value the legitimate use of "$\exists\, x, y$" is possible even if there is only 1 individual, and

the difference between there being only 1 individual and there being more does not seem to be shown by whether $(\exists x, y) : \sim Q(x, y)$ is a contradiction or a tautology.

I expect you will say that that is obviously foolish because we ought to adopt your convention and write not

$$(\exists x, y) : \sim Q(x, y)$$
$$\text{but} \qquad (\exists x, y) : \sim Q(x, y) : \vee : \sim(\exists x) \,.\, \sim Q(x, x)$$

and there being more than 1 indiv[idual] would then be shown by the legitimate use of $(\exists x, y)$ in your sense.

[Struck out:] But the other convention seems to me as good as yours.
[After this the draft breaks off]

This is what seems to be the later of two drafts of a reply to **113**. It seems that Ramsey did not actually send it (see comments on **113**) but wrote instead to Schlick, who in turn communicated the answer to Wittgenstein in a letter dated 15 August 1927. The philosophical part of the Ramsey letter (faithfully transmitted by Schlick) is printed in *Wittgenstein and the Vienna Circle*, pp. 189–91, along with a later comment (9 December 1931) by Wittgenstein on this argument with Ramsey. Ramsey's letter to Schlick is in the Vienna Circle Archive in Haarlem. Both of Ramsey's drafts for a letter to Wittgenstein are printed in F. P. Ramsey, *Notes on Philosophy, Probability and Mathematics*, ed. Maria Carla Galavotti (Naples: Bibliopolis, 1991), pp. 341ff.

Allgemeine Erkenntnislehre – M. Schlick, *Allgemeine Erkenntnislehre*, 2 vols (Berlin: Springer, 1918, 1925); English translation, *The General Theory of Knowledge* (Vienna and New York: Springer, 1974).

means the same as $(\exists x)$: $fx \,.\, \sim Q(x, a)$ – "The Foundations of Mathematics", *Proceedings of the London Mathematical Society*, ser. 2, 125: 5 (1925), 351–2; repr. in Ramsey, *The Foundations of Mathematics* (1931), *Foundations* (1978), and *Philosophical Papers* (1990), p. 19, p. 170, p. 180 respectively (see comments on **113**).

used by Russell to – To do, i.e. to define the class in question.

115. To J. M. Keynes, [Summer 1927]

Wien III
Parkgasse 18

My dear Keynes,

It's ages since you have heard from me. I haven't even thanked you for your little book about Russia which you sent me about a year and a half ago. I won't try to explain my long silence: there were lots of reasons for it. I had a great many troubles one overlapping the other and postponed writing until they would be all over. But now I have interrupted my troubles by a short holiday and this is the occasion to write to you. I have given up teaching long ago (about 14 months)* and have taken to architecture. I'm building a house in Vienna. This gives me heaps of troubles and I'm not even sure that I'm not going to make a mess of it. However I believe it will be finished about November and then I might take a trip to England if anybody there should care to see me. I should VERY much like to see you again and meanwhile to get a line from you. About your book I forgot to say that I liked it. It shows that you know that there are more things between heaven and earth etc.

Please remember me to your wife.

Yours ever
Ludwig

* I couldn't stand the hot bottle any longer

little book about Russia – *A Short View of Russia*, published by the Hogarth Press in December 1925. One of its ideas, that Soviet Communism, for all its detestable faults, "might represent the first stirrings of a great religion", is probably what earned Wittgenstein's favourable comment below.

house in Vienna – This is the house (Parkgasse 18 or Kundmanngasse 19) which Wittgenstein built for his sister Margaret Stonborough. It is described and illustrated in many books and brochures, most fully in Paul Wijdeveld, *Ludwig Wittgenstein: Architect* (London and New York: Thames & Hudson, 1994).

the hot bottle – See **112**.

1928

116. To J. M. Keynes, [1928]

Wien III
Kundmanngasse 19

My dear Keynes,

I've just finished my house that has kept me entirely busy these last two years. Now however I will have some holidays and naturally want to see you again as soon as possible. The question is, would you mind seeing me. If not, write a line. I could come to England in the first days of December but not before, as I must first set to right parts of my anatomy. Enclosed you will find a few photos of my house and hope you won't be too much disgusted by its simplicity.

Yours ever
Ludwig

Write soon!

parts of my anatomy – It is not known to what sort of ailment this phrase refers.

1929

117. To F. P. Ramsey, [early 1929]

Dear Ramsey,

I saw Braithwaite yesterday to ask him what exactly Dr. Broad had told him and this morning I went to see Mr. Priestley. He said that he couldn't remember having talked to you about my dissertation and if he had, that he could never have said with any certainty the book would count as he is only the secretary of the Board of research studies and it is not for him to decide the matter. He thinks however that there will be no difficulty about it in the meeting of the Board of research studies if the report from the moral science board should be favorable. In any case he will be so kind to talk to the authorities Sorley and Broad about it and let me know if there is anything for me to do. So I believe the matter is in good hands now and I dont worry about it any longer.

A thing which is of much greater importance to me and was so on Saturday evening, is, that I still can't understand the way you behaved in this matter, that's to say I can't understand how, being my supervisor and even – as I thought – to some extent my friend having been very good to me you couldn't care two pins whether I got my degree or not. So much so, that you didn't even think of telling Braithwaite that you had told me my book would count as a dissertation. (I afterwards remembered one day talking to you about it in hall and you saying "it would be absurd to write another thesis now straightaway".) – Now you'll want to know why I write to you all this. It is not to reproach you nor to make fuss about nothing but to explain why I was upset on Saturday and couldn't have supper with you. It is always very hard for a fellow in my situation to see that he can't rely on the people he would like to rely on. No doubt this is due to a great extent to the difference of nationalities: What a statement seems to imply to me it doesn't to you. If you should ever live amongst foreign people for any length of time and be dependent on them you will understand my difficulty.

Yours

Ludwig

P.S. I find on looking at my College bills that I have informed you wrongly about the fees; they are altogether only 59£ not 70 or 80 as I thought.

Braithwaite – See **92**. At this point Braithwaite was Secretary of the Faculty Board of Moral Science.

Broad – C. D. Broad (1887–1971), at the time University Lecturer, later Knightbridge Professor of Moral Philosophy at Cambridge.

Priestley – Raymond Edward Priestley (1886–1974), Sir Raymond, as he later became, was at this time the administrative officer responsible for graduate students. He was to be a close friend of Wittgenstein's. He left Cambridge in 1935 and was in succession Vice-Chancellor of the Universities of Melbourne and of Birmingham. A geologist by training, he had taken part in Antarctic expeditions under Sir Ernest Shackleton (1907–9) and Captain R. F. Scott (1911–12).

the book – The issue was whether Wittgenstein's *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* would be accepted as a dissertation for the degree of PhD of the University of Cambridge. In the event it was so accepted and Wittgenstein received the title of Doctor.

Sorley – W. R. Sorley (1855–1935) was Knightbridge Professor of Moral Philosophy at the time.

118. From F. P. Ramsey, [Spring 1929]

Dear Ludwig

I really think it will be all right about your degree and that you need not worry.

As for my own part in the matter I am extremely distressed to hear you find me unreliable, for I really don't think I have let you down in anything I have done or not done, and it seems to me there must be some misunderstanding between us.

Until my recent talk with Braithwaite I had no doubt that your book would count as a dissertation and that you would get your degree for it. I have talked about it to Moore and to Braithwaite previously, assuming that this was so, as I think they assumed too and only questioning the detail of whether the preface would do for a summary. This confidence was founded originally on my conversation with Priestley which seemed to me conclusive, for though he has no authority to bind the board I did not think his view of the matter was in the least likely to be questioned.

As I say, I had no doubts on the matter till I was told by Braithwaite that Broad was doubtful and was going to think it over. I did not take this very seriously, thinking that Broad was likely to change his mind being possibly actuated by a slight degree of malice which often prompts people to say something unpleasant which they never carry into act. Nor did I see anything I could usefully do; I do not know Broad well enough to be confident of improving matters by talking to him, supposing there to be any possibility of malice on his part; and when the matter came up at the Moral Sciences Board, I knew Moore, at any rate, would do everything possible in your interest.

What exactly I said to Braithwaite I don't remember, but my conversation with Priestley I'm sorry to say didn't enter my head. Though it was my original reason for thinking the book would certainly do I had forgotten it for the moment. As to my "not telling Braithwaite that I had told you the book would count as a dissertation", I am very sorry if he didn't get that impression and indeed rather surprised. I did not say so in so many words but I thought he knew it. For instance I remember telling him once of a conversation I had with Moore as to whether you ought to write a summary, from which it must have been clear (since all that was in question was a summary of the book) that both Moore and I took for granted that the book would do for a dissertation and were only doubtful about whether the preface would do for a summary.

Where I think you may be right to reproach me, is not for anything I have done or not done but for my attitude of mind, which was, I am very sorry to say, rather casual. I did not at first realise how much you wanted a degree or the sacrifices you were making for it, and when I did fully realise what a monstrous cheat it would be if you didn't get one after all, I was afraid I had unnecessarily alarmed you since I thought the risk of anything going wrong was infinitesimal, and therefore tried to make as little of it as possible in what must have seemed the most unsympathetic way. I also felt that if anything did go wrong it might be through some fearful muddle and not through villainy as you naturally supposed. Though I thought Broad might be actuated by malice I did not know that he was, and I did not feel that I had behaved badly, and so I got too much drawn into making excuses.

But, Ludwig, it really isn't true that I didn't care twopence whether you got your degree. I may not have realised how much it mattered, but I did mind about it, and I don't know how you can suppose I didn't. I must express myself very obscurely and I get drawn into making excuses of a foolish kind. But it hurts me that you should suppose I don't feel the warmest friendship for you, or that you cannot rely on me.

If, after all, your book is not accepted as a dissertation, I shall have made the most serious mistake in thinking my conversation with Priestley proved that it would; but if, as I still think very unlikely, it should come to that I do hope you will believe that it was only a mistake and forgive me for it and for whatever else I have done or failed to do.

Yours ever
Frank Ramsey

The text of this letter is based on a fair copy in Ramsey's hand which the late R. B. Braithwaite found among his Ramsey papers. In all probability Ramsey either sent another copy of the letter to Wittgenstein or made the same points verbally.

119. To J. M. Keynes, [May 1929]

Dear Keynes,

It is very difficult for me to write this letter to you. Please try to understand it before you criticize it. (To write it in a foreign language makes it still more difficult.) But I feel I could not come to you as you wanted me to without beginning to give and perhaps to ask for long explanations which I am sure you wouldn't like. When I saw you *last* I was confirmed in a view which had arisen in me last term already: you then made it very clear to me that you were tired of my conversation etc. *Now please don't think that I mind that!* Why shouldn't you be tired of me, I don't believe for a moment that I can be entertaining or interesting to you. What I *did* mind was to hear through your words an undertone of grudge or annoyance. Perhaps these are not exactly the right words but it was that sort of thing. I couldn't make out for some time what could be the cause of it all, until a thought came into my head which was by an accident proved to be correct. It was this: I thought probably you think that I cultivate your friendship amongst other reasons to be able to get some financial assistance from you if I should be in need (as you imagined I might be some day). This thought was *very* disagreable to me. I was however proved right in this way: In the beginning of this term I came to see you and wanted to return you some money you had lent me. And in my clumsy way of speaking I prefaced the act of returning it by saying "Oh, first I want money" meaning "first I want to settle the money business" or some such phrase. But you naturally misunderstood me and consequently made a face in which I could read a whole story. And what followed this, I mean our conversation about the society, showed me what amount of negative feelings you had accumulated in you against me. Now this could never prevent me from having tea with you; I would be very glad if I could suppose that your grudge for which I could not see any good reason had passed away. But the second remark in your letter seems to show me that you don't want to see me as my friend but as my benefactor. But I don't accept benefactions except from my friends. (That's why I accepted your help three years ago in Sussex.)

If some day you should want me to have tea with you without talking over my finances I will gladly come. – Please don't answer this letter unless you can write a *short* and *kind* answer. I did not write it to get explanations from you but to inform you about how I think. So if you can't give me a kind answer in three lines, no answer will please me best.

Yours ever
Ludwig

the society – The discussion club known as "The Society" or "The Apostles". Cf. comment to **37**.

three years ago – Since this presumably refers to Wittgenstein's visit to England in 1925, he ought to have written "four" and not "three".

120. From the Minutes of the Moral Science Club, 10.5.1929

At the end of the meeting Mr Wittgenstein suggested that an old rule of the Club that no paper should be more than seven minutes long should be renewed. Most of the members present seemed to think that it would be desirable to set a time limit to papers, but that seven minutes was too short.

Mr Wittgenstein also suggested that the reading of minutes should be abolished.

This rule was adopted in Michaelmas Term 1912, apparently at Wittgenstein's suggestion, see notes to **7** above. On the present occasion discussion of it was deferred to the last meeting of the term when officers were to be elected.

121. From the Minutes of the Moral Science Club, 17.5.1929

Mr Wittgenstein said that enough philosophical problems could be raised in 20 minutes to occupy the minds of the members of the club for the rest of the evening.

An amendment proposed by M. O'C. Drury applying such a rule to supplementary meetings only (meetings not open to those of MA standing in the University) was eventually carried.

122. From J. M. Keynes, 26.5.1929

King's College,
Cambridge.
May 26 1929

Dear Ludwig,

What a maniac you are! Of course there is not a particle of truth in anything you say about money. It never crossed my mind at the beginning of this term that you wanted anything from me except to cash a cheque or something of that kind. I have never supposed it possible that you could want any money from me except in circumstances in which I should feel it appropriate to give it. When I mentioned your finances in my note the other day, it was because I had heard that you were bothered with heavy unexpected fees and I wanted, if this was so, to examine a possibility which I think I suggested to you when you first came up, namely that some help might conceivably be got out of Trinity. I had considered whether it could be a good thing for me to do anything myself, and had decided on the whole better not.

No – it was not "an undertone of grudge" that made me speak rather crossly when last we met; it was just fatigue or impatience with the difficulty, almost impossibility, when one has a conversation about something affecting you personally, of being successful in conveying true impressions into your mind and keeping false ones out. And then you go away and invent an explanation so remote from anything then in my consciousness that it never occurred to me to guard against it!

The truth is that I alternate between loving and enjoying you and your conversation and having my nerves worn to death by it. It's no new thing! I always have – any time these twenty years. But "grudge" "unkindness" – if only you could look into my heart, you'd see something quite different.

Well, if you can forgive me sufficiently, will you come and dine with me in hall to-night (I shall be away nearly all next week)? – When you can talk or not talk about cash, just as you feel inclined.

Yours ever
JMK

123. To G. E. Moore, [15.6.1929]

Saturday

Dear Moore,

Mr Butler wrote to me on Thursday to see him about the research-grant and to explain what exactly it was I wanted, and what were my plans for the future. – I did my best to explain it but don't feel sure that I have succeeded in making myself clear. I therefore, in this letter, want to state again as clearly as I can my position, to guard against all possibilities of misinterpretation.

I am in the middle of a bit of research work which I don't want to break off as it seems to me hopeful. I possess all in all about 100£ which will carry me through the vacations and perhaps another month or two; but I mustn't use up all I've got, to leave some reserve for the time of looking round for a job. – I therefore ask the College to grant me say 50£ which would enable me to go on with my philosophical work till, at least, Xmas. If it should turn out, that in this time I have been able to produce good work – as judged by anybody the College would consider an expert in the matter – and if, further, I should feel capable of continuing my work with success, *then* I propose to ask the College again for some sort of subvention.

Now Mr Butler asked me, how long, I thought, this might go on. – I can't answer this question, because I don't know, how long I will be able to produce good work. (For all I know – though I don't think it's likely – I may cease tomorrow.) But, I think, this question rests on a misunderstanding of what I really want. Let me explain this: Supposing I was run over by a bus today and then were to see my tutor and say: "I'm now a cripple for lifetime, couldn't the College give me some money to support me." Then it would be right to ask the question: "And how long do you propose this to go on, and when will you be self- supporting?" But this is *not* my case. I propose to do work, and I have a vague idea, that the College in some cases encourages such work by means of research grants, fellowships, etc. That's to say, I turn out some sort of goods and *if* the College has any use for these goods, I would like the College to enable me to produce them, as long as it *has* use for them, and as long as I *can* produce them. – If, on the other hand, the College has no use for them, that puts an end to the question.

Yours ever

Ludwig Wittgenstein

The date of the letter is by Moore.

Mr Butler – J. R. M. Butler, later Sir James (1889–1975), then Tutor in Trinity College, later Regius Professor of Modern History at Cambridge.

On 19 June 1929 the Council of Trinity College authorized a grant of £100 to be made to Wittgenstein to enable him to carry on his research at Cambridge: £50 was to be paid at Midsummer and £50 at Michaelmas.

G. H. von Wright commented, "Anybody who knew Wittgenstein will find this letter and the next (**124**) extremely characteristic of their author."

124. To G. E. Moore, [18.6.1929]

Tuesday

Dear Moore,

This is a P.S. to my last letter. I met Mr Butler in the street today and he asked me 1.) whether you knew all about my financial position (I said, you did) 2.) Whether I had no other sources of getting money (I said, no) 3.) Whether I had not got relations who could help me (I said, I had and had told you so). Now as it somehow appears as if I tried to conceal something, will you please accept my written declaration that: not only I have a number of wealthy relations, but also that they would give me money if I asked them to. BUT THAT I WILL NOT ASK THEM FOR A PENNY. (Unless – of course – they owed me money.) Also I will add, that this is not a mere caprice of mine.

Yours ever

Ludwig Wittgenstein

125. To B. Russell, [July 1929]

Wednesday

Dear Russell,

On Saturday the 13th I will read a paper to the Aristotelian Society in Nottingham and I would like to ask you if you could possibly manage to come there, as your presence would improve the discussion *immensely* and perhaps would be the only thing making it worth while at all. My paper (the one *written* for the meeting) is "Some remarks on logical form", but I intend to read something else to them about generality and infinity in mathematics which, I believe, will be greater fun*. – I fear that whatever one says to them will either fall flat or arouse irrelevant troubles in their minds and questions and therefore I would be much obliged to you if you came, in order – as I said – to make the discussion worth while.

Yours ever

Ludwig Wittgenstein

* though it may be all Chinese to them

The Joint Session of the Aristotelian Society and the Mind Association was held in University College, Nottingham 12–15 July 1929. Wittgenstein's written contribution "Some Remarks on Logical Form" was published under that title in the supplementary volume 9 to the *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* (1929), 162–71. The piece about infinity actually read appears to be preserved in Ramsey's papers: see my contribution, "Wittgenstein and Ramsey", to Galavotti (ed.), *Cambridge and Vienna*, p. 24.

Russell's appointments diary does not show that he went to Nottingham.

1930

126. An Epistle

On the Subject of the Ethical and Aesthetic Beliefs
of
HERR LUDWIG WITTGENSTEIN
(doctor of philosophy)
to
RICHARD BRAITHWAITE, ESQ., M.A.
(fellow of king's college)

Timid I venture on a doubtful field,
The heaviest weapon in our verse to wield;
Presume with Dryden's couplet to engage
The wild philosophers in all their rage.
Well knowing how I merit the reproach
In learned fields, unlearned, to encroach;
Well knowing that, a puny Jonah, I
The great Behemoth of the seas defy;
Whose learning, logic, casuistry's so vast
He overflows the metaphysic waste.
Yet still I hope a line or two may stick,
And that, like Jonah, I shall make him sick.
If, Richard, this analogy alarms,
I do but fight the foe with his own arms;
Whose tortuous mind will easily compare
An opera to begetting of a chair.
(This process may propriety confuse,
But it's a metaphor I've heard him use.)
My own beliefs are trite and few, as fit
The narrow compass of a rustic wit:
Good Sense and Reason; for the rest I hope
Voltaire had owned them, and adorned them Pope:
The rational Common Sense, the easy rule,
That marked for centuries the Cambridge school.
At Thelema I hope to graduate,
In Epicurus' garden, Candide's mate;
May think life silly, laugh that it's no worse,
With Herrick, love my mistress and good verse.
We know what's what, and that, so Butler says,
For metaphysic is the highest praise.
If further you should ask, I take my stand
On an old creed, that all can understand.
Well knowing we this truth shall certain find

"Value resides alone in States of Mind."
Then, if your question you again repeat,
Why should I rush upon a clear defeat;
Since my opponent, logic being his trade,
Will sure confute me, or if not, evade.
To such a question I might make reply
Let him first mind his trade, and then will I.
But who, on any issue, ever saw
Ludwig refrain from laying down the law?
Dickens a master, Milton playing tricks,
The King supreme in English politics;
The greatest fools in Cambridge saints confest,
Ludwig their master, haloed and half drest:
While all whom I admired, the few I loved,
He bored, damned utterly, or disapproved.
In every company he shouts us down,
And stops our sentence stuttering his own;
Unceasing argues, harsh, irate and loud,
Sure that he's right, and of his rightness proud.
Such faults are common, shared by all in part,
But Wittgenstein pontificates on Art.
So, Richard, chivalry is my excuse,
I but defend my violated Muse:
Though she, perhaps, is rather used to rape,
Is that a reason monsters should escape?
But this most urges me, and lulls my fear,
That he declared all reasoning useless here.
Either we know, or nothing can be known;
He's right, and we are different in the bone.
With privileged omniscience soaring high
He sees the Universe before him lie;
Each whirling lost electron's motion planned
He reads as easy as a watch's hand.
Seeing at once each individual fact,
Knowing the consequence of every act,
Plotting a graph on space's winding curves,
Conscious that instant if one atom swerves.
Knows too the black depths of the human mind,
Motive and thought their name, shape, case assigned;
The highest ecstasy, most grim despair,
Moments when beauty lights the laden air;
Moments when lovers part, or when they meet,
Omniscient Wittgenstein grows indiscreet:
Knows every stray reflection, joke and whim,
Hopes, fears and fancies, all are known to him.

Yet, though he searches every thought and shape
The flying values from the net escape.
He tells us so; and yet it seems to me,
(Perhaps it's only my simplicity)
This perfect map, where everything is shown,
Remains as yet, even to him, unknown.
Ludwig's omniscient; well, I would be civil,
But is he God almighty, or the Devil?
Still let me state his case as best I can
Before his logic and his facts we scan;
Nor interrupt like him, for "half a mo'",
His line of argument, my couplets' flow.
 On the world's walls the fluttering values beat –
Like drunken mot'rists skidding down a street –
Unknown, touched, tasted, heard, smelled, undescried,
The values ring the bell, but stay outside.
All statements men can make, or false or true,
Have facts for predicate, and object too.
All this admitted, it were clearly seen
That statements about value nothing mean.
His case, if rightly I have understood,
Is, he talks Nonsense when he talks of Good.
For all there is of fairest and of best
Remains by human language unexprest.
Thought scarce can think, and Science cannot show
The element of value here below.
And yet, should I suggest that right and wrong
Are silly burthens of a foolish song;
All actions, thoughts and feelings much the same,
And value nothing but an empty name:
Or, venturing to try the stuff on art,
Say that his whistling's better than Mozart;
Say Milton should, with D—, go to school,
Say Arnold were, by L— side, a fool:
If all such statements nonsense are alone,
Why are they even sillier than his own?
 For he talks nonsense, and he statements makes,
Forever his own vow of silence breaks:
Ethics, aesthetics, talks of day and night,
And calls things good or bad, and wrong or right.
The universe sails down its charted course,
He smuggles knowledge from a secret source:
A mystic in the end, confessed and plain,
He's the old enemy returned again;
Knowing by his direct experience

What is beyond all knowledge and all sense.
Accept his statements, and what can we find
In all his mystery, but a State of Mind?
Valued by him, and doubtless rightly so,
But fact one day psychology will know.
It seems the great logician has forgot
That either these things are, or they are not;
Ev'n for the mystic does this rule persist,
His visions, if they do exist, exist;
Subject as much to science' scrutiny
As copulation or the rule of three.
His visions, in that universal view,
Were shown – and in asylum case books too.
How many saints and sages past have raved
The self same nonsense to a world unsaved.
Since science marches on with steady feet,
The map grows yearly more and more complete;
And proves the visions that a saint believed
The sick illusions of a mind deceived.
But in these matters, as he has confest,
Reason's worth little, even at the best.
Agreed: from which I should have thought it clear
The perfect place for tolerance was here.
Let each one choose, but for himself alone,
Nor busy prophets cast the foremost stone.
But Ludwig will have none of this, and would
Issue pope's orders what is bad, what good.
What can he do then, for 'tis very clear
No one attends, and only fools will hear?
Reasons dismist, his orders none obeys,
And yet he'd have us follow in his ways.
He's but one method, that is, to persuade;
Then let him come to us to learn his trade.
Persuasion, verse's great prerogative,
By which the poets love, and sometimes live.
Values that all philosophers escape
The poets catch, and give them form and shape.
His words t'express his meaning were too weak,
But what if Racine, Milton chose to speak?
In ten neat syllables forever lies
All heroes feel, and all that know the wise:
Where Dryden's couplets march with ringing stride
You'll find no value missed, or left outside.
But once again we to his creed return,
Its essence scan; what is it, but to burn?

Religion once again shall raise its head –
A general resurrection of the dead: –
A battered harlot, who, though old, has found
A silly priest, whose lech'ry thinks her sound.
We, like good rationalists, have never been
Tempted by Jesus, or by Magdalene.
The murder's out; if once we disagree
Cast into darkness, millstones and the sea.
This his persuasion, but he well may find
The world has got itself another mind,
Since Calvin saved our souls with rack and flame,
And Calas died to save a Catholic's name.
He'd raise religion; has he never thought
How Voltaire laughed God, once and all, from court?
When fiends arise, we holy water take
And sprinkle them with drops from Ferney's lake.
Let him to work then, go and gather sticks,
And pile his faggots to roast heretics.
But do not be surprised, if we remember
Gunpowder treason, and the Fifth November.
The good old English feelings still exprest
A hempen collar suits fanatics best.
If not so violent, still we may recall
Religion's safe – behind a madhouse wall.
And so, before he makes our earth a hell
He may find heaven in a padded cell.

To us to-day what can Religion give,
What secrets can it teach us, how to live?
What is the offer that old Blockhead makes
To calm our minds, unriddle our mistakes?
On Moscow's walls Religion is decreed
"The People's Opium." He who runs may read.
But honest minds, of thinking unafraid,
By no desires and by no passions swayed,
With self reliant courage that can face
Life's brevity, the silences of space:
Sure to all problems by which men are tried
Good sense alone the answer can provide:
Such minds reject all prophets, for they see
These preach but folly, dust and vanity.
They fill with misery the short time we have,
Hurrying us down to their hell-painted grave.

Ah, Richard, why must we, who know it vain,
Seek value through this tortured maze of pain;
When we so easily in matter find

Every delight of body and of mind.
I pity Ludwig while I disagree,
The cause of his opinions all can see,
In that ascetic life, intent to shun
The common pleasure known to everyone.
For how should he in matter value see
When matter is to him a mystery.
In his brain's convolutions round are hurled
The secrets hidden from a sober world;
Both good and evil, ecstasy and sin,
He does not seek without, but finds within.
Therefore to him the plan was void and null,
Therefore the world was valueless and dull:
He makes a virtue of his own defects,
And what he cannot understand, rejects.
For had he ever used his hands or eyes
He could not then mere matter so despise.
 If once in closing winter he had seen,
When crisp air rings as the hard frost bites keen,
The blue sky faintly veiled with hoary white,
And on the elms the golden leaves hang light;
Seen from a ploughland slope clearly revealed
The wood's bright colours, crimson hedgèd field;
With farm and church th' enormous plain extends
To low-hung mist, where the horizon ends;
The moulded hills and flashing river lie
Like a great map beneath the vaulting sky.
Then it seems possible the soul might soar
Across those fens, and those far heights explore:
With sparkling blood our quickened pulses beat,
And all earth's beauty lies before our feet.
Yet, should it rain, should even a cloud arise,
The vision leaves our souls, the scene our eyes:
Should indigestion, or a cold, attack,
We curse the frost, and see the world in black.
 Or take the visions Music's power bring –
Mozart reborn on a vibrating string –
When ordered sound our every sense controls,
And from their bodies sheep's guts hale men's souls.
When from low phrases, gentle and half heard,
The music soars up like a flying bird,
With high resistless march so pure and strong,
An autumn gale, it sweeps our minds along;
Rapt to a paradise no words can tell,
And yet – a broken string would snap the spell.

On matter all our highest good depends,
And, matter failing, every value ends.
The world is ours, with all its kingdoms brave,
There is no more, although we want, to have.
If Ludwig looked at these things, he might see
Their value, and his notions falsity.
Yet one more instance, and my theme I leave,
And you may then believe, or disbelieve.
 If Ludwig ever had fair Chloe seen
My case were won, nor had there question been.
If ever he had loved, and watched, and known
The air, smile, laughter that are all her own;
Her entrance joyous as the sun's first light
That shows an April morning to our sight;
Had mark'd a gesture's or a movement's grace,
And seen warm firelights flick'ring on her face;
He'd own that here all Good, all Beauty lies,
Nor seek a world transcending Chloe's eyes.
Yet, like her flowers, of common earth she's made,
She too is mortal, and she too must fade;
And matter's victory is easily told;
Chloe, for all her beauty, must grow old.
The landscape changes with the changing year,
The music ends, the visions disappear;
The wrangle of philosophers must cease,
And even Wittgenstein must hold his peace;
To self-same darkness they and we descend,
Ludwig and Chloe equal in the end.
Richard, my sermon's old, my moral trite,
Yet in the end, will you not own I'm right?
The issue's simple, as it seems to me
Between good sense, sainted insanity;
To alter facts till they our passions fit,
Or face the truth, and make the best of it.

Julian Bell

The Venture, 5 (February 1930), 208–15

Julian Bell (1908–37) was the son of Clive and Vanessa Bell, nephew of Viginia Woolf. An Apostle and a central figure among the younger associates of the Bloomsbury circle he was at this time working on a thesis at King's College. Already a published poet, but never a modernist, he for a while adopted the manner of Pope as in the present epistle. *The Venture* was edited by him along with William Empson. After a brief period teaching English in China he became a medical orderly in the Spanish Civil War. All four Cambridge volunteers who fell in that war had some association with Wittgenstein: John Cornford and David Guest were critical of him; Ivor Hickman was a candid friend, who respected Wittgenstein but was not in awe of him.

Wittgenstein's reaction to the "Epistle" is not known, but he spoke of having left behind him "all those Julian Bells".

the Cambridge school – It is not clear what school is being referred to: "rational Common Sense" recalls rather the system of Reid (a Scot) or Locke (an Oxford man).

Thelema – The abbey in Rabelais's *Gargantua*, where "Do what thou wilt" was the whole of the law. ("Thelema" means "Will".)

"*Value resides alone in States of Mind*" – A cardinal principle of Moore's *Principia Ethica*.

"*half a mo'*" – An allusion to Wittgenstein's use of outdated slang; compare notes to **355** below.

Say Milton should, with D—, go to school, / Say Arnold were, by L— side, a fool – Probably Dadie (George) Rylands and (F. R.) Leavis are intended.

Calas died to save a Catholic's name – A Protestant judicially murdered after a false allegation that he had strangled a son who wished to convert to Catholicism. He was later vindicated by Voltaire.

127. To G. E. Moore, [end March 1930]

Dear Moore,

I am in Vienna now, doing the most loathsome work of dictating a synopsis from my manuscripts. It is a terrible bit of work and I feel wretched doing it. I saw Russell the other day at Petersfield and, against my original intention, started to explain to him Philosophy. Of course we couldn't get very far in two days but he seemed to understand a *little* bit of it. My plan is to go and see him in Cornwall on the 22nd or 23rd of April and to give him the synopsis and a few explanations. Now my lectures begin on Monday the 28th and I want to know if it is all right if I come to Cambridge not before the 26th. Please write to me about this as soon as possible as I have to make my plans accordingly. I am kindhearted therefore I wish you a good vacation although I haven't a good one myself.

Yours ever

Ludwig Wittgenstein

Address:

L.W. bei Dr Wollheim
IV. Prinz Eugen Str. 18
Austria Wien

synopsis – Refers to the typescript of *Philosophische Bemerkungen* mentioned in **128**. It was prepared on the basis of Wittgenstein's large manuscript volumes I, II, III, and part of IV (nos. 105–8 in the catalogue given in G. H. von Wright, *Wittgenstein*).

Petersfield – The Beacon Hill School which Russell and Dora Black had founded in 1927 was near the town of Petersfield in Hampshire. Wittgenstein had gone to see Russell there, probably between 14 and 16 March, just before leaving for Austria. On his return, after Easter Sunday (20 April), he again went to see Russell, who was then on holiday in Cornwall. See **128**, and comments. Russell wrote to Moore both before the former meeting and after the latter. In the earlier letter (11 March) he said: "I do not see how I can refuse to read Wittgenstein's work and make a report on it. At the same time, since it involves arguing with him, you are right that it will require a good deal of work. I do not know anything more fatiguing than disagreeing with him in an argument."

The first of the subsequent letters (5 May) expresses essentially the same judgement as that contained in Russell's formal report (for which see comments on **128**). In a later letter (8 May), telling Moore that he had sent this report in to the College Council, he comments: "I find I can only understand Wittgenstein when I am in good health, which I am not at the present moment." (Letters in the G. E. Moore collection of Cambridge University Library.)

Philosophy – The capital letter may indicate a work or planned work of Wittgenstein's though the manuscript volumes use rather the title *Philosophische Bemerkungen* or *Betrachtungen*. Moore of course cannot yet have seen a typescript.

Wollheim – Oskar Wollheim was a family friend of Wittgenstein's later brought safely to New York by Wittgenstein's sister. Possibly the rest of the family were already in Neuwaldegg and Wittgenstein stayed in town in order to dictate. Only one meeting with Schlick and Waismann (22 March) is recorded in this vacation.

128. To B. Russell, [25.4.1930]

Dear Russell,

Still in the motorcar to Penzance I thought of a notation I have used in my M.S. which you cann't possibly understand as – I believe – it's explained nowhere: I use the sign II'. Now first of all I must say that where you find two capital I like this II this means π for I had no π on my typewriter. Now π′ is a prescription, derived from the prescription π (i.e. the prescription according to which we develop the decimal extension of π) by some such rule as the following: "Whenever you meet a 7 in the decimal extension of π, replace it by a 3" or "Whenever you get to three 5's in that extension replace them by 2" etc. In my original M.S. I denoted this sort of thing by ${}^{5}\bar{\pi}^{3}$ and I'm not sure whether I haven't used this sign in a place of my typewritten M.S. too. – Of course there are probably lots and lots of such details which make the paper unintelligible, quite appart from the fact that it is unintelligible in any case.

Another instance occurs to me just now: When I write "$\underset{4}{\pi}$" I mean π developed to 4 places in some given system, say, the decimal system. Thus $\underset{1}{\pi} = 3$ $\underset{2}{\pi} = 3.1$ in the decimal system. I cann't think of anything else to write in the moment. I feel depressed and terribly muddled in my head which is partly due to the Cambridge climate which it allways takes me several days to get accustomed to. I feel there must be almost as many faults as words in this letter, but I cann't help it.

Yours ever

L. Wittgenstein

The references are to one copy of the typescript, which was posthumously published as *Philosophische Bemerkungen*, ed. R. Rhees (Oxford: Blackwell, 1964) – this title was written on the typescript eventually given to Moore. After dictating it in Vienna during the Easter Vacation (see **127**), Wittgenstein took a copy of it to Russell in Cornwall. At Moore's request Russell and J. E. Littlewood reported on the work for the College Council (see **129** and **133** below).

faults – There were indeed many spelling mistakes, here mostly removed.

129. From B. Russell to the Council of Trinity College, 8.5.1930

Beacon Hill School
Harting, Petersfield,
8th May 1930

Owing to illness I have been prevented from studying Wittgenstein's recent work as thoroughly as I had intended to do. I spent five days in discussion with him, while he explained his ideas, and he left with me a bulky typescript, "Philosophische Bemerkungen", of which I have read about a third. The typescript, which consists merely of rough notes, would have been very difficult to understand without the help of the conversations. As it is, however, I believe that the following represents at least a part of the ideas which are new since the time of his Tractatus:

According to Wittgenstein, when anything is the case there are certain other things that might have been the case in regard, so to speak, to that particular region of fact. Suppose, for example, a certain patch of wall is blue; it might have been red, or green, or so. To say it is any of these colours is false, but not meaningless. On the other hand, to say that it is loud, or shrill, or to apply to it any other adjective appropriate to sound would be to talk nonsense. There is thus a collection of possibilities of a certain kind which is concerned in any fact. Such a collection of possibilities Wittgenstein calls a "space". Thus there is a "space" of colours and a "space" of sounds. There are various relations among colours which constitute the geometry of that "space". All this is, in one sense, independent of experience: that is to say, we need the kind of experience through which we know what "green" is, but not the kind through which we know that a certain patch of wall is green. Wittgenstein uses the word "grammar" to cover what corresponds in language to the existence of these various "spaces". Wherever a word denoting a region in a certain "space" occurs, the word denoting another region in that "space" can be substituted without producing nonsense, but a word denoting any region belonging to any other "space" cannot be substituted without bad grammar, i.e. nonsense.

A considerable part of Wittgenstein's work is concerned with the interpretation of mathematics. He considers it false to say that mathematics is logic or consists of tautologies. He discusses "infinity" at considerable lengths and links it with the conception of possibility that he has developed in connection with his various "spaces". He believes in "infinite possibility", as he calls it, but not in actual "infinite classes" or "infinite series". What he says about infinity tends, obviously against his will, to have a certain resemblance to what has been said by Brouwer. I think perhaps the resemblance is not so close as it appears at first sight. There is much discussion of mathematical induction.

The theories contained in this new work of Wittgenstein's are novel, very original, and indubitably important. Whether they are true, I don't know. As a logician who likes simplicity, I should wish to think that they are not, but from what I have read of them I am quite sure that he ought to have an opportunity to work them out, since when completed they may easily prove to constitute a whole new philosophy.

Bertrand Russell

The Council of Trinity College had on 19 June 1929 made a grant of £100 from the Sizarship Fund to Wittgenstein. On 7 March 1930 the Council authorized G. E. Moore to obtain reports on Wittgenstein's work: two reports from Russell and Littlewood were read on 6 June 1930 and on 13 June 1930 a further £100, payable in two instalments, was authorized. For Littlewood's report see **133** below.

Brouwer – L. E. J. Brouwer, the father of Intuitionism. Wittgentsein was in fact stimulated by his lectures in Vienna in 1928, though according to Ramsey he had himself already formed semi-intuitionist ideas.

130. On Julian Bell's "Epistle on Wittgenstein"

When Julian, babbling of the Things he Feels,
His Values vague and inarticulate,
The *Bloomsbury* musings of his Soul reveals,
And mystic maunderings on the ways of Fate,

He's naturally upset that *Wittgenstein*
Should ask him to explain the Things he says –
So takes a Refuge in abusive line,
And Tolls the Knell of (thank God) long-passed days.

G.G.

The Cambridge Review (9 May 1930), 391

Epistle – **126** above.

G.G. – has yet to be identified. Note the conceit: it is a *Bell* that tolls.

131. From R. B. Braithwaite, 16.5.1930

Board of the Faculty of Moral Science
King's College
16 May 1930

Dear Wittgenstein,

I am delighted to be able to inform you that this Board has created a Probationary Faculty Lectureship and has appointed you thereto for a period of one year from 1 October 1930. With the consent of the General Board of Faculties of the University, it has fixed your stipend for this year at £250, it being understood that you will give during each of the three terms of the academical year 1930/31 three hours instruction weekly on the same sort of lines (e.g. one hour lecture and two hours conversation class) that you are giving this year.

In the memorandum which we sent to the General Board on the subject, reference was made to the very great success your lectures and conversation classes this year are, and to the fact that your pupils get a great deal from you that they could not get in any other way.

You will understand that this arrangement as at present made holds only for the next academic year. Neither the state of our finances nor the number of philosophical students can be prophesied further ahead.

This Board also agreed, and the General Board has consented to pay you an extra £25 for your work this year, making the total payment to you this year £100 instead of £45. This is because you are giving three hours instruction weekly, and when we suggested £45 we thought that you would only be giving two hours weekly. So I enclose a cheque for £62.10.0 (= £37.10.0 + £25) and a form of receipt, which please sign and return to me.

Yours sincerely
R. B. Braithwaite
Secretary of the Board

I am sorry I have been (and am still) ill, and so have missed your discussion of generality.

discussion of generality – Possibly at the lectures on 12 or 15 May noted in Wittgenstein's pocket diary.

132. From the Minutes of the Trinity Mathematical Society, 28.5.1930

Business matters having been settled, the President called upon Dr. Ludwig Wittgenstein to give a lecture on "The Foundations of Mathematics".

After saying that it was impossible to talk about such a wide subject in such a short time, Dr. Wittgenstein made a very successful attempt. He began by quoting and criticizing Russell's definition of number, i.e. "the class of classes similar to a given class", similarity being defined by means of a 1–1 correlation, and pointed our that Russell confuses the existence of this correlation with the possibility of its existence. An example of a similar confusion is provided by two points and the line joining them. Frege says that a line joins the two points even if it is not drawn, but actually what exists is only the possibility of drawing the line.

After this idea had been more fully developed, Dr. Wittgenstein went on to describe the late Mr. Ramsey's very ingenious work on the subject. The only flaw in this work and that of Frege and others was that it was so brilliant that any child could see it was wrong.

The lecture concluded with some remarks about arithmetic, to the effect that the latter was really only a game and that its applications had nothing to do with mathematics.

A lively discussion followed, a large part of which was spent in trying to convince Mr. L. C. Young that there was no sense in saying a = a is a convention. In the course of one of his numerous illustrations from everyday experience Dr. Wittgenstein suggested that the chessboard might have a real application to problems of war in Mars, when Bishops really did move sideways. The President took advantage of a lull in the discussion and the meeting was declared social at 11.0 P.M.

Charles Coulson
15/10/30

L. C. Young – (1905–2000) Isaac Newton Student and later Fellow of Trinity, Young went on to be an eminent mathematician. For his view of Wittgenstein see note to **155**. He collaborated for while with H. S. M. Coxeter (see **166** and **167**) in Group theory.

133. From J. E. Littlewood to the Council of Trinity College, 1.6.1930

Trinity College
Cambridge
1.6.30

Wittgenstein has explained some of his ideas to me verbally in some 6 or 8 sessions of 1 hour to one hour and a half. This has been inadequate for a full understanding, but enough to give me the impression that his work is of the highest importance. Revolutionary as his ideas are, some of them seem to me clearly destined to become eventually part of logical thought. There are cases of new absolutely first class work when even an amateur can feel confident, and justifiably, in its importance. This seems to me to be such a case, and as the Council has asked for my opinion, here it is. But I *am* only an amateur in logic, even in mathematical logic.

I began, for some or no reason, with the idea that W. might be living an old capital, or unable to communicate his ideas. I was agreeably surprised, and it is true to say that I always became interested when once the session started, and enjoyed it. His illustrations struck me as highly illuminating, he often guessed what was at the back of my hesitations, and so on. In fact whatever his idiosyncracies in other matters may be, on his own ground he is simply the first rate mind.

The idea about old capital is entirely groundless. W. wrote a book once before, and I mean it literally when I say that I see no reason whatever why he should not write another, and perhaps a more important one.

J. E. Littlewood

Wittgenstein's pocket diary indeed shows eight meetings with Littlewood in May 1930, many ending just in time for dinner in Hall.

> *Wittgenstein's Fellowship Election* – In the late twenties the question of making Ludwig Wittgenstein a title *B* Fellow was raised at the Council. A report from Russell seemed to make reservations, e.g. he said he was not convinced that Wittgenstein's theories were true. And any reservation is apt to be fatal to a Fellowship. Wittgenstein had not yet acquired his later status, and the Council were sceptical. They decided that *I* should have a series of talks with Wittgenstein and report and they would act accordingly. The whole thing seems to me incredible – I was a personal friend of Wittgenstein; suppose the answer was "no". I said the Council were asking no light thing, but we went through with it.
>
> Wittgenstein never finished a sentence, except to say "It is impossible", and there was an *obbligato* of "I am amiss". I was favourably convinced after half a dozen interviews, reported, and Wittgenstein was given a *B* Fellowship.
>
> A fee seemed hardly relevant to the fantastic picture. The Council suggested £5. C. D. Broad, saying that I had been seen staggering exhausted into Hall, got it raised to £10 (quoted by permission from J. E. Littlewood, *Littlewood's Miscellany*, rev. edn by Béla Bollobás (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), p.138).

As will be seen from the notes to Russell's report above (**129**) the reports were really required for a grant from the Sizarship Fund, but a future Fellowship may well have been envisaged by Littlewood and indeed by the Council itself.

idiosyncracies – recte: idiosyncrasies.

134. To G. E. Moore, 18.6.1930

18.6.30.

Dear Moore,

Thanks so much for the good news. I'm very grateful to the Council for its munificence.

I'm glad to hear you are enjoying your holydays. I don't yet enjoy mine, for I haven't yet been able to do any proper work, partly, I believe, due to the opressive heat we've had here during the last week or so, and partly because my brain simply won't work. I hope to God this state won't last long. It is very depressing when all the lights are put out as if there had *never* been any burning. However, I dare say it'll pass over. – Would you be so very kind and take the Midsummer £50 for me and send them on to my Address? If it's not to[o] much trouble for you I should be very much obliged if you would.

I hope your vacation will continue satisfactorily and that mine will soon be allright too. I'ld be very glad if you would let me hear from you again some time how you're getting on etc.

Yours ever

Ludwig Wittgenstein

grateful to the Council – On the basis of the reports from Russell and Littlewood (**129** and **133** above), the Council of Trinity College had granted Wittgenstein another £100 to enable him to continue his research at Cambridge.

Address – Refers evidently to Wittgenstein's address during the Long Vacation, which he spent in Austria.

135. To G. E. Moore, 26.7.[1930]

26.7.

Dear Moore,

This is to tell you that I have only just now begun to do any proper work at all. Until about a week ago I hardly did any and what work I did wasn't any good. I cann't imagine what could have been the matter with me, but I felt both extremely excitable and uncapable of sticking to any thought. It may have been some sort of tiredness or the climat, for we had a terrible hot southwind blowing allmost all the time which has a bad effect on many people. However I hope it's over now, I'm in the country again since about 10 days, in the same place where I was last year and I'm quite alone at present. – I have received the £50 from Trinity. My life now is very economical, in fact as long as I'm here there is no possibility of spending any money. I hope you're getting on all right.

Yours ever
Ludwig Wittgenstein

The year is Moore's undoubtedly correct dating.

same place – On the Hochreit. Cf. also **136**. Wittgenstein's pocket diary shows that he went there on 17 July.

136. To G. E. Moore, [August 1930]

Dear Moore,

Thanks for your letter. I'm sorry you have such trouble at home. These illnesses are a bl. nuisance. – My work is getting on moderately well but not more than that, I hardly ever feel quite alive. The weather is tolerable though rather changeable. Desmond Lee, whom you know, came to Austria and stayd with my people near where I live for a few days. We talked about you and wondered whether you'ld like the place. And I almost think you would. I'm going to stay here as long as possible to get something done.

Yours ever
L. Wittgenstein

Lee – H. D. P. (later Sir Desmond) Lee (1908–93), then an undergraduate and student of classics at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge. Lee stayed with Wittgenstein's family on the Hochreit in 1930. Wittgenstein himself was living in a gamekeeper's cottage on the estate. Lee edited *Wittgenstein's Lectures: Cambridge 1930–1932* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1980), and wrote an account of his friendship with Wittgenstein, which ended, in a way naturally, when he started on an academic career in ancient philosophy. Later he was a successful headmaster and head of a Cambridge College.

137. From R. E. Priestley, 2.12.1930

The Registry of the University
Cambridge

Dear Wittgenstein,

I cannot tell you how pleased I was to get your note. Heartiest congratulations. It is first class news and will, incidentally, solve your accommodation problems I suppose for you will presumably have rooms in Trinity. You can now be assured that, as long as the brain will turn over, your work can go on and that Cambridge does appreciate you. The next step I hope will be a University Lectureship in due course.

Yours

R. Priestley

news – The election to a Trinity Fellowship, formal notification of which came later (see **138** below).

138. From the Master of Trinity, 5.12.1930

Trinity College,
Cambridge.
Dec. 5. 1930

Dear Sir,

It gives me great pleasure to state that at the meeting of the Council of the College this morning you were elected to a Fellowship under Title B

Yours very sincerely
J. J. Thomson.

The admission to the Fellowship is at 2.15. this afternoon could you come to the Lodge at 2.5.
Dr Wittgenstein

J. J. Thomson – Master of Trinity, 1918–40.

1931

139. To P. Sraffa, [18.2.1931]

Dear Sraffa,
I am expecting you in my room on Friday about 7.45 as our Hall begins at 8.
Yours
Ludwig Wittgenstein

I want to talk with you about vivisection. I think it is closely related to the things we are talking about.

Piero Sraffa (1898–1983), a brilliant though not prolific Italian economist, editor of the works of David Ricardo. Essentially a refugee from Fascism since 1926, he pursued his career in Cambridge, at first under Keynes's aegis, and was attached to King's College, but in 1939 became a Fellow of Trinity. He was not only a friend of Wittgenstein's from 1930 but one of the few whose intellectual influence Wittgenstein recognized, as may be seen from the Preface to *Philosophical Investigations*. The two met soon after Wittgenstein's return in 1929 but regular meetings for discussion began in Michaelmas Term (October 1930). The few evening appointments generally arise from meetings of societies or clubs. This is the only dinner appointment and also the first written communication we have. It shows that there was an informal programme for discussion and gives some indication of how widely that might range.

Dated by Wittgenstein's diary: the invitation was for 20 February 1931.

140. To W. H. Watson, 19.8.1931

19.8

My dear Watson,

I shouldn't be surprised if you thought that I'm a beast for not answering your letter so long. The truth is, I was exceedingly busy all the time and not quite well part of the time. I was in Norway for about 3 weeks (including journey) looking for a job for my lady friend. Now I'm back in Austria working in the country and wishing we had better weather, because the daily rain depresses me. My work makes moderately good progress. Thanks frightfully for the John O'London's Weekly. It's splendid and not only the article about philosophy but all the rest too. I hoped, in the beginning of the vac that I should be able to dictate part of what I had been writing in the last 3 years thereby getting it into a more final shape. But I can't yet as I've got to write such a lot of new stuf. It is very likely that I shan't lecture next Michaelmas term and use all the time to get nearer the end of my work. But I want to have private conversations with students if there are any who care to have them. I address this letter to McGill as I'm not sure whether your old Cambridge address would still reach you. Please let me hear from you, I shall be interested in everything you write to me and I shall always appreciate any nonsensical newspaper cuttings you send me.

Yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

Postmark: Hohenberg 20.VIII.31.

William Heriot Watson (1899–1987) was a physicist doing research in Cambridge who attended some of Wittgenstein's classes and met with him privately occasionally in the academic years 1929–30 and 1930–1. As these letters show he went to teach in Canada. In 1939 he published *On Understanding Physics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1938), making much use of Wittgenstein's teaching. For his indebtedness to Wittgenstein the second edition, *Understanding Physics Today* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963), should also be consulted. In the letters exchanged between the two, note the salutation, "My dear Watson/Wittgenstein", a degree warmer than usual. There may also be an echo of Sherlock Holmes.

my lady friend – Marguerite Respinger.

nonsensical articles – Wittgenstein kept a collection of such (still extant) in a box file. A good number were sent by Watson, who was particularly averse to "toleration of the type of professedly philosophical writing which accompanies popular expositions of modern science, under the guise of synthesizing knowledge, for some religious end" (*Understanding Physics Today*, p. xi). On this occasion he had sent (with the exclamation "What about it?") the cutting referred to above from the *John O'London's Weekly*, supplement dated 18 July 1931, addressed to "The Enquiring Layman". The author J. W. N. Sullivan puts forward the opinion that any new light thrown on the great historic problems of philosophy comes chiefly from modern science. "Integral thinking is a slow process." Watson sidelines this whole paragraph with an exclamation mark. The reverse of the cutting contains the literary competitions for which the *Weekly* was best known, a humorous review of Casanova's diaries, and other middlebrow material.

141. To G. E. Moore, 23.8.1931

23.8.31

Dear Moore,

Thanks for your letter. I can quite immagine that you don't admire Weininger very much, what with that beastly translation and the fact that W. must feel very foreign to you. It is true that he is fantastic but he is *great* and fantastic. It isn't necessary or rather not possible to agree with him but the greatness lies in that with which we disagree. It is his enormous mistake which is great. I.e. roughly speaking if you just add a "~" to the whole book it says an important truth. However we better talk about it when I come back. – I've had a very busy time since I left Cambridge and have done a fair amount of work. Now I want you to do me a favour: I don't intend to give any formal lectures this term as I think I must reserve all my strength for my own work. I will however have *private* (unpaid) discussions with students if there are any who want them. That's to say I don't want to be mentioned in the lecture list this term but at the same time Braithwaite could tell his Students (and you can tell yours) that if any of them wish to have conversations with me I will arrange times with them. Please write a line to Braithwaite to explain this before the beginning of September. – During the first month of the vac we had terribly hot weather and now it's abominably cold and rainy. I'm sorry to hear that the weather in England depresses you, I'm not as fit as I ought to be either.

Yours ever

Ludwig Wittgenstein

Weininger – Otto Weininger (1880–1903) was an author whom Wittgenstein greatly admired. The book here referred to is the English translation of Weininger's most famous work, *Geschlecht und Charakter* (Sex and Character). In a rare (perhaps unique for him) borrowing from the Special Order Books in the University Library, Wittgenstein took out "Weininger" on 1 June 1931, perhaps to show it to Moore, whom he met on 2 June.

fantastic – Here solely in the sense of "excessively fanciful".

private discussions – Throughout the academic year 1931–2 Wittgenstein held (unpaid) conversation classes but did not give formal lectures.

142. To W. H. Watson, 30.10.1931

Trin. Coll. 30.10

My dear Watson,

The other day I found your full address written on a bit of paper which I could not find when I answered your letter during the vac. I then simply wrote to McGill University Canada and so probably my letter hasn't reached you. I enjoyed the cutting from John O'London's Weekly very much. – I am not lecturing this year, only giving an informal discussion class once a week in my new rooms. This is because I am very busy with my own work. Almost all our friends have gone down and I see very few people – which however I don't regret. Drury is still up and I'm glad he is. – I hope to publish something in less than a year's time. –

Prof. Hardy the Mathematician who was lecturer here when I was an undergraduate and then whent to Oxford has now come back here as a Prof. and is one of the few people I see. I like him very much. The other day I met Priestley (another excellent man) and we talked of you. – I hope you're well, let me hear from you and your life and send me nonsensical articles if you come across any.

Yours ever

Ludwig Wittgenstein

Postmark: Cambridge 30 Oct 1931.

when I answered your letter – **140** above, which explains most of the allusions in the first paragraph here.

my new rooms – Wittgenstein in October moved from Bishops Hostel to a set (H4) in Great Court. It was only in 1933 that he recovered his old undergraduate set at the top of the tower in Whewell's Court.

Drury – Dr Maurice O'Connor Drury (1907–76), a close friend of Wittgenstein's at Cambridge and later in Dublin where Wittgenstein visited him in June 1936 and fairly frequently thereafter.

Hardy . . . Priestley – See **28** and **117** respectively.

143. From W. H. Watson, 12.11.1931

McGill University
Montreal
The Macdonald Physics Laboratory
12th November 1931

My Dear Wittgenstein,

[. . .]

I can't tell you how glad I am to know that you hope to publish something within a year and that you are able to devote yourself to that without the strain of a lecture course. If you plan to publish in German please do try to arrange that a translation into English be made by some competent person. Following your advice I have been dipping into Frege's 'Grundgesetze' which by some inexplicable good chance is in the McGill University Library. It took me a long time to straighten out the distinction between Wahrsein and Fürwahrhalten but I've now got it. Even to me, a poor physicist who knows nothing of the subtlety of the German language Frege's arguments on psychology and logic and on the difference between the characters of a concept and the properties of a thing struck me as clearly and forcibly expressed. But this difficulty of a language whose fine points I do not know makes the reading extremely laborious and only the belief that I am mining where there is ore gives me the patience and determination to persevere. Hence the plea for a translation!

[. . .]

You ask for nonsensical articles, I enclose a gem of a cutting from the Montreal Star. I'm sure you'll appreciate the additional colour given by American Journalism. Further see 'Nature' Oct 24th for the report on the British Association discussion on the Nature of the Universe. By the bye did you read Smuts' address to the B.A. It's the most marvellous collection of rot, and sententious rot at that. In fact I should strongly recommend that you glance thro' 'Nature' in the Union Library regularly as likely as not you'll find one gem per month (i.e. one per four numbers of the magazin[e).]

[. . .]

With best wishes for your good health and the successful completion of your manuscript.

Yours ever
Wm H. Watson

cutting from the Montreal Star – One survives from 22 October 1931 describing Sir Oliver Lodge's belief that the mind of Edison was directing work from beyond the grave. Psychic research and phenomena figured largely in Wittgenstein's Collection of Nonsense. Lodge (1851–1940) was an eminent physicist who had collaborated with Heinrich Hertz but who lent his name to spiritualism.

1932

144. Note from P. Sraffa, [January–February 1932]

If the rules of language can be constructed only by observation, there never can be any nonsense said. This identifies the cause and the meaning of a word.

The language of birds, as well as the language of metaphysicians can be interpreted consistently in this way.

It is only a matter of finding the occasion on which they say a thing, just as one finds the occasion on which they sneeze.

And if nonsense is "a mere noise" it certainly must happen, as sneeze, when there is cause: how can this be distinguished from its meaning?

We should give up the generalities and take particular cases, from which we started. Take conditional propositions: when are they nonsense, and when are they not?

"If I were king" is nonsense. For either I, or the job, would have to be entirely different. I know exactly what the reasons are that make this unthinkable: and I see that the modifications required to make it thinkable would be so great, that I would not recognize myself so transformed, or nobody would say that the job, as adapted to my present self, is that of a king.

"If I were a lecturer" has sense. For I was last year, and I don't think I have changed much since, nor has the job. The difference is small. Or rather I cannot see it: I don't know exactly in what I have changed since last year. There is nothing repugnant to me in the idea.

But does it simply depend on my knowledge? (For a difference is big or small, according to whether I see it clearly or not). If I knew enough they would all be nonsense.

Then of course there are the propositions where "if" stands for "when": i.e. the name stands for a class, and the proposition is true (or thinkable, as supra) for one member at least of the class.

A note preserved in Sraffa's hand, now in Trinity College Library (Sraffa papers D3/12/71), obviously intended to be shown to Wittgenstein in the course of their discussions.

Dated by reference to Sraffa's being a lecturer "last year" – his Assistant Lecturership ceased on 30 September 1931 – and by references to Sraffa's thoughts on this topic in Wittgenstein's manuscripts.

145. To W. H. Watson, 4.3.1932

4.3.32

My dear Watson,

I haven't heard from you for ages (you beast!) On the other hand I excuse you as there isn't much to write about this place either. My work hasn't been going very satisfactorily these last two months. My head was hardly ever as clear as I should have wished it to be. My discussion classes are going on all right. I wish I had you here. The other day I met Kapitza (I don't know how you spell him) and we talked about you. He really *is* like a boy, quite likeable, but we haven't anything in common to talk about.

Drury is going down at the end of this term (i.e. in a week's time). I'm sorry to lose him. Inman is near Manchester in a settlement doing some kind of economical research. Lee is in the office of a coal mine (in England). I don't hear much from them (they're as lazy as you are). As I said, I should be glad to see you and talk about work with you, but, of course, there's no chance.

Le me hear from you soon.

Yours ever

Ludwig Wittgenstein

Postmark: Cambridge 4 Mar 1932.

Kapitza – P. L. Kapitsa (the usual English transcription) (1894–1984), Russian physicist and Nobel Prize winner. He worked at Cambridge 1921–34. In 1932 he was already FRS and Director of the Mond Laboratory in Cambridge.

Inman – John Inman, who graduated with a First Class in Economics in 1930, was assisting Ernest Simon, former Lord Mayor of Manchester, to write a book on the housing problem. He spent his working years in the Government Economic Service.

Lee – See **136**.

146. From W. H. Watson, 6.3.1932

McGill University
Montreal
The Macdonald Physics Laboratory
6th March 1932

My Dear Wittgenstein,

How are you getting along these days? It is such a long time since I heard from you: I hope you are keeping all right and have not been overworking to the jeopardy of your health. How is the book getting along? Do let me know when it will be published and remember your promise to autograph a copy for me!

I have managed to get a few newspaper cuttings for you, – including the marvellous series which I told you about in Cambridge and which I have now found among my papers. You should get amusement by the slow perusal of these.

I have found the winter less trying than I was led to suppose I should, but I have not much to show for my activity during the period. Lecturing is an unremunerative business intellectually speaking, when one has not the time to dally by the way but must drive through a prescribed curriculum. Your lectures and discussions occupy a happy place in my memory because they seemed free from the urge of a programme, and because I am able to impart so little of that spirit in my own.

When are you coming out here on a visit and to see the United States? I hope you have not abandonned that idea, but plan some day to make the trip: I promise to take you to the cinema when you come to Montreal. We have the choice of French and English: I prefer the former.

The next time you write to me, provided you have the leisure and the inclination, please tell me some of your own history so that I may connect the isolated and undated facts that linger very hazily in my memory. And while you are doing this, could you also supply information about Frege? Now please do.

With kindest regards and all good wishes

Yours

Wm H. Watson.

marvelous series – Twenty instalments of "the great national debate" on "Where are the Dead?" from the *Daily News and Westminster Gazette* of 1928 in which many popular thinkers took part – Bernard Shaw, Hilaire Belloc, G. K. Chesterton, Lloyd George, Arthur Conan Doyle, and others. It began with a sceptical article pointing out that it would be hard to find space for so many of them. As if survival raised logistical difficulties!

147. To W. H. Watson, 8.4.1932

8.IV.32

My dear Watson,

Thanks so much for your letter dated 6th March. By now I suppose you will have got a letter I wrote to you from Cambridge. I am in Vienna now for the vac. but working pretty hard. I did take some stuff to a man who is writing a book on philosophy (in my sense of the word). I do this partly as I'm growing more and more doubtful as to the publication of my own work, that is, of what I've been writing in the last 3 or 4 years. Somehow I may not have the power of condensing it and getting it into a printable shape and in this case I don't mind if somebody else publishes it. However, we'll see what happens.

I don't know that there is any chance of my coming over to America. I can't afford a pleasure trip of course but could only come over to do some job. Which practically means that I could only come over if I was asked to lecture a some university. But I don't know why they should ask me. (All the more as Philosophy in most places there – if I'm not mistaken – takes a radically different turn from that which I care to give it).

Thanks awfully for the cuttings. There is a book I *absolutely* want you to get. It's called "Points of View" and is a collection of broadcastings from the B.B.C. containing the philosophy of Lowes Dickinson, J. B. S. Haldane, Dean Inge, Oliver Lodge and one or two others . . . Please buy it if you can get it in Montreal. It's worth it. You can't get more concentrated stupidity, muddleheadedness and humbug. At this point I broke off and went to bed with a flu. I'm feeling better now but still rather stupid and dull. So I think I'd rather leave this letter as it is and write more another time. *What kind* of information do you want about Frege? His views? That would be a tall order. And about his life I know very little indeed. He was when I first met him in 1911 about 60 and Professor at Jena and died about 1922 – Best wishes.

Ever yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

Thanks awfully for the cuttings!!!

a man who is writing a book on philosophy (in my sense of the word) – Friedrich Waismann (1897–1959), assistant to Schlick and for long a close associate of Wittgenstein's, was entrusted with the task here described. The book was posthumously published as *The Principles of Linguistic Philosophy*, ed. R. Harré (London: Macmillan, 1965), but see the 2nd edn, ed. G. P. Baker and R. Harré (London: Macmillan, 1997), or the German original, *Logik, Sprache, Philosophie*, ed. G. P. Baker, B. McGuinness, and J. Schulte (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1976), for an account of its genesis. Wittgenstein came to be very hostile to Waismann's project. Waismann came to Cambridge in 1937, remained there when Austria was annexed, and in 1939 found a post in Oxford, where he taught for the rest of his life.

my coming over to America – Watson's suggestion in **146**.

"Points of View" – *Points of View: A Series of Broadcast Addresses*, by G. Lowes Dickinson, Dean Inge, H. G. Wells, J. B. S. Haldane, Sir Oliver Lodge, and Sir Walford Davies, with introduction and summing-up by G. Lowes Dickinson and supplementary letter by Sir Oliver Lodge (London: Allen & Unwin 1930).

148. From W. H. Watson, 25.5.1932

3514 Hutchison St.
Montreal.
25th May 1932

My Dear Wittgenstein,

[. . .]

I have only one gem to send you from the newspapers but you must admit that it is priceless. This coupled with the recent news that Einstein is tackling the disarmament problem seem to justify one in writing him off the list of active scientific thinkers. It is too bad for he has done such a lot of valuable work, quite apart from relativity.

I reserved writing to you till this evening for this afternoon I heard Whitehead in our physics lecture room speak on the bearing of philosophy on science. He was *awful*. His place is the pulpit *definitely*. He actually cherishes the notion that philosophy is THE source of new ideas and gave us all the old stuff about psychology and physiology and the most hellish muddle in his contacts with logic. He does not seem to realise that the words "true" and "false" cannot be used correctly about hypotheses; instead he employs the argument that there is nothing hard and fast about the truth of a scientific theory as a general excuse for woollyness, and hazyness. I'm glad you weren't there!

I was very disappointed to read in your last letter you have been becoming despondent about ever preparing your work for the press yourself, and hope that this has been a merely temporary phase occasioned by influenza from which I hope you have now quite recovered. Cambridge will look its best about now but I suppose you are packing up in order to miss the Trinity Ball! Which reminds me of our adieus last summer. By the bye what became of the photograph you *promised* to send me showing yourself as you approve? But remember I don't want one of these spook photographs so dear to the heart of "All Over" Lodge!

I am going to get "Points of View" when the weather gets a bit cooler! I wish I could have showed you the article written by the head of the Physics department here for some forthcoming omnibus volume on physics and human interests generally. I was asked to read and criticise and had to tell my boss that if I were in the position to say whether what he had written should be published, I should say no. He is an old man now, logically feeble at the best, but completely unhinged by Eddington and Jeans. I think it is a great pity that a man who has great capacity for sympathy and kindness should have been led to the most terrible muddle conceivable by the "religious" writings of Eddington in particular.

Now I'll have to get off to bed.

Hope you have a good vacation in Austria this summer and that soon I shall hear good news about the publication of your work.

With best wishes

Yours ever
Wm H. Watson

gem from the newspapers – This one cannot at the moment be identified. There are many items concerning Einstein in Wittgenstein's Collection of Nonsense, some illustrating Einstein's love for publicity and clowning, others his views on politics, the future of man, religion, and other general matters. Some were collected by Watson, others by Wittgenstein's brother Paul, yet others no doubt by Wittgenstein himself. One or two are on Einstein's side – the "nonsense" is the attempt of a priest or a schoolmaster to disprove Einstein's theories by elementary methods.

"*All Over*" *Lodge* – Humorous variation on the Christian name ("Oliver") of the physicist and spiritualist referred to in **143** above.

"*Points of View*" – See **147** above.

head of the Physics Department – Arthur S. Eve (1862–1948), an eminent physicist who had worked with Rutherford and was often described as a lovable character. He gave some popular or general lectures, on topics such as "The Universe as a Whole".

Eddington and Jeans – Sir Arthur Eddington (1882–1944) and James Jeans (1877–1944), rival astronomers. The former had the approach of a physicist, the latter that of a mathematician. They were alike in being successful popularizers of their subjects, which they were intent on relating to philosophy and religion. Both were Trinity men.

149. To W. H. Watson, 13.6.1932

13.6.1932

My dear Watson,

Thanks so much for your letter and the cutting. Yes, I believe Einstein is just a bloody journalist – I was glad to hear that you've got a little animal and hope he's doing well. I've had a very busy term, doing lots of work and seeing pupils. But my work progresses very slowly for it's such a huge job and I'm not equal to it. – What you wrote about your boss interested me very much, it's such a typical thing to happen nowadays to otherwise good and kind people.

I wish I could come over some time and see you and have discussions and conversations with you.

Yours ever

Ludwig Wittgenstein

Einstein is just a bloody journalist – A reaction to the news (see **148**) that Einstein was occupying himself with disarmament.

a little animal – Cf. "Tierchen", the endearment Wittgenstein used for Marguerite (see **140**). Meant here is Watson's first son, Peter, born that year, now Professor Emeritus at Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, where these letters are preserved.

150. From W. H. Watson, 2.9.1932

3514 Hutchison St.
Montreal.
2nd Sept 1932

My Dear Wittgenstein,

There is not much pleasure in wielding a pen these days in Montreal on account of the heat and humidity but I cannot allow myself any longer to put off the letters I have intended to write for so long. I feel that the cuttings which I enclose are so absolutely priceless that you will forgive me. Isn't it pleasant to think that the Chancellor of Cambridge University is capable of the nonsense with which the newspaper credits him! (There CAN'T be any mistake in reporting – especially the paragraph I have marked). "The Atom Bombardiers" is typical of the American newspaper when it lets itself go. One of these days I am going to put forward a Freudian theory of this "Mystery of Mysteries" stuff!!

Your propositional sign reached me all right. Remembering your illustration in your lectures at Cambridge I wondered whether the finger prints printed from the photographic negative on to your face in the print were intended and therefore yours, or merely the evidence of careless Technique! Thanks very much for the photo.

[. . .]

I should like you to look at Volterra "The Theory of Functionals" pp. 204, 205, on "Abstract Spaces"; among other things this: ". . . it is what mathematics has always done, passing continually from the concrete to the abstract." What do think of that? – and from a man who has made many inventions in modern mathematics!

How is your manuscript getting on? I hope you are not giving up in favour of the man in Vienna who is writing a book of "philosophy in your sense". By-the-bye please let me know the name of the man and the book when it is expected to appear: in fact, if you would be so good as to get me a copy and let me know what it costs I should send you the necessary cash. I may not be a German scholar but I am quite handy with a lexicon!

[. . .]

Remember me to Drury and others when you can.

Yours ever
Wm H. Watson

Chancellor of Cambridge University – Stanley Baldwin. In a speech to the Imperial Conference in Ottawa he spoke, e.g., of his reverence "because your [scientists'] work lies all the time in the region of the profound mysteries of the universe". The cutting still exists, with this passage marked.

"*The Atom Bombardiers*" – A cutting (also preserved) from the *Montreal Gazette* for 1 August 1932. The passage ends: "It is with humility and awe that the atom bombardiers are overwhelmed as they penetrate deeper and deeper into the Mystery of Mysteries that lies at the atom's core."

Volterra – Vito Volterra (1860–1940), Italian mathematician.

the man in Vienna – See note to **147**.

151. To W. H. Watson, 4.11.1932

Nov. 5th

My dear Watson,

Thanks so much for your letter dated Sept. 2nd and please forgive me for not writing to you sooner. I had however lots of work and lots of trouble personal and otherwise which prevented me. The cuttings were excellent! – In a week or two Jeans is giving a lecture on the "Furthest depths of the universe". I had an invitation to go but I thought I'd better stay away. – I'm giving more lectures (or rather discussions) now than usual. 4 hours a week, one hour being a special course for mathematicians. My audience is rather poor – not in quantity but in quality. I'm sure they don't get anything from it and this rather worries me. Moore is still coming to my classes which is a comfort. My own work is progressing slowly. I have had news from Drury and Townsend lately. Drury is in South Wales doing work to help the unemployed. He is as excellent as ever. Townsend is teaching in a school. I will now close the letter which isn't really a letter at all but I feel in the very worst condition for writing. What with flu, bad pupils and rotten weather I'm inclined to feel a bit depressed at times. However this will all pass over. Please write again soon. I'm always awfully glad to hear from you. But I'm a bl . . . correspondent myself.

Yours ever

Ludwig Wittgenstein

Postmark: Cambridge 4 Nov 1932.

Jeans is giving a lecture – The Sidgwick Memorial lecture for that year, actually delivered on 26 November. It discussed the shape and weight of the galaxy and Einstein's account of the curvature of space.

special course for mathematicians – see **155** and note for a description of this course.

Townsend – Raymond Townsend (1902–*c.*1986) came from New Zealand and was thus a bit older than normal when he obtained a First in the Moral Science Tripos in 1931. He remained in Cambridge for a further year and obtained a qualification in French. He was a schoolmaster and remained a friend of Wittgenstein's as the letters (**254** and later) show. He made his notes available to Lee and King for the publication of *Wittgenstein's Lectures: Cambridge 1930–1932: From the Notes of John King and Desmond Lee*, ed. H. D. P. Lee (Oxford: Blackwell, 1980).

152. From W. H. Watson, 13.11.1932

3514 Hutchison St.
Montreal.
13th Nov. 1932

My Dear Wittgenstein,

It is such a long time since I heard from you that I wonder what has happened to you. I hope you have been keeping all right.

I cannot tell you how much I look forward to the appearance of your work in print for I have nothing here except the Tractatus where I can have philosophical stimulus without being pained in the process. I have been working hard at physics and at present am engaged in pulling Maxwell's electrical theory to pieces! It is surprising how different the theory looks when viewed critically as an invention. It contains at least one hypothesis of the white rabbit variety. I don't know yet what is going to happen when this hypothesis is thrown out.

How is Cambridge now-a-days? Do you still go to the Cinema in Mill Road, or have the Trinity Dons found out? I shall expect to hear from you soon a few intimate details of this sort to help my memory of the place.

You have noticed that there is a small photograph accompanying this. I hope you will discern the intelligent face of my son. Since that picture was taken he has made great progress and my wife and I are very happy about him. I think you will admit I have shown great restraint in the above statement.

Now do let me know how you are.

Yours ever
Wm H. Watson

Maxwell's electrical theory – Watson's view of this, which was much influenced by Heinrich Hertz ("Maxwell's theory is Maxwell's system of equations"), is indicated at several points in *On Understanding Physics*.

Cinema in Mill Road – Now no more: it was called the Kinema (see **153**). Perhaps it was thought less respectable than the Arts Cinema near the Market Place.

153. To W. H. Watson, 24.11.1932

Nov. 24th

My dear Watson,

Thanks so much for your letter and the photo. The boy looks *very* sweet, I must say. I don't say this to flatter you. I've been feeling rather rotten for the last 2 or 3 weeks and am always afraid of a kind of mental breakdown. I haven't been able to touch my work for about 10 days except today I've done a little work and perhaps I'm beginning to get better. I have however kept on lecturing the whole time. My classes are middling. Moore still comes to them and there are two mathematicians who are rather good (you don't know them). I've been to the cinema only about 3 or 4 times this term and once to the "Kinema" (Mill Rd.) to a perfectly rotten war film. Lee, whom I think you'll remember sent me the enclosed cutting which by the way I want back for my collection but I want you to see it just to get an idea . . .

Let me hear from you soon again.

Yours ever

Ludwig Wittgenstein

Postmark: Cambridge 24 Nov 1932.

154. From W. H. Watson, 29.12.1932

3514 Hutchison St
Montreal.
29/12/32.

My Dear Wittgenstein,

Thanks for your two letters. I'm sorry you weren't feeling so well for a bit and hope that with the vacation that has passed. May I suggest that perhaps you were needing a rest!!!

Your cutting about the Mind People is marvellous. I return it along with a cutting which I am sure you'll be glad to add to your collection. Please note the remarkable fitness of Dr. Crocker's subject! If I had had a copy I should like to have sent you Max Planck's lecture on "The concept of causality" – it is recorded in the Proceedings of the Physical Society of London, September 1932: it is marvellously muddled. I feel tempted to write a criticism of it but always seem too tired to begin – "This is a mess, where to begin?"

I hope you'll tell me something about the Jeans lecture to which you were invited and decided not to attend. (I suppose that will mean that the Cambridge Press is going to publish some more rot.)

Remember me kindly to Lee and Drury if you happen to write to them.

With kindest regards

Yours ever
Wm H. Watson

Mind People – From a newspaper report of Dr C. C. Hurst's *The Mechanism of Creative Evolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1932), which forecast the evolution of successors of man in whom the influence of matter will have been almost if not entirely obliterated. This cutting is preserved.

Dr Crocker's subject – The cutting under discussion is really that containing a prediction that Einstein's discoveries might give us a new conception of God. Dr Crocker (at the meeting concerned) spoke quite independently about "a perfect anaesthetic", which, Watson humorously suggests, might have been useful.

1933

155. To M. L. Cartwright, [January 1933]

Saturday

Dear Miss Cartwright,

Thanks very much for your letter and the paper on "Number". I wonder if you would allow me to discuss it next Wednesday in our class. It would come in very useful indeed. It's the only way of getting anything out of these classes to try to formulate your thoughts on a subject yourself, and then have them pulled to bits. For if they can stand the pulling, all the better. I cann't pick holes if there aren't any. In case you don't object to my discussing your paper on Wednesday, please don't bother to reply.

Yours sincerely
Ludwig Wittgenstein

Dame Mary Cartwright (communication to editor) dated this event to "two terms around 1933" when she attended Wittgenstein's class for mathematicians, which did indeed begin in Michaelmas Term 1932 and on a Wednesday. Later Mistress of Girton and a FRS, Miss Cartwright (1900–98) was a gifted mathematician, a pupil of Hardy and subsequently collaborator with Littlewood. As she recalls: "The title was 'What is Three?' and he kept saying 'Give me time'. A trestle table was covered with bits of paper with items like those in the *Tractatus* and I looked at those during the long silences. I was disappointed because he did not get as far as the infinite cardinals", and again: "It *was* difficult and important but there was a lack of security and confidence in himself." Professor George Temple confirmed these impressions: he kept thinking that a revelation might be coming, but, for him, it never did. Professor L. C. Young took a different view: an insight into Wittgenstein's way of thinking and his need for depth made them much better mathematicians. Concretely he remembered the discussion of 10 lines to do with the introduction of irrationals in Hardy's *Pure Mathematics* (Hardy didn't have depth: it was the collaboration with Littlewood that made him fruitful). Similarly Wittgenstein had previously cured Ramsey of thinking purely mathematically about logic. All these remarks are from private communications to the editor: publicly, in an obituary of Wittgenstein's friend H. D. Ursell, Young says: "Wittgenstein's idea merged into a whole new atmosphere of creativity at a deeper level. This was perhaps one of the University's best periods" (*Bulletin of the London Mathematical Society* 20 (1970), 344–6). Dame Mary Cartwright (again in a letter) said, "Wittgenstein's general attitude was part of a simultaneous shift, here and elsewhere, the U.S.A. in particular, with the introduction of modern topology and its abstract approach and the general shift owed very little to [him]." Notes on Wittgenstein's "Philosophy for Mathematicians, 1932–33" are printed in *Wittgenstein's Lectures: Cambridge 1932–1935*, ed. Alice Ambrose (Oxford: Blackwell, 1979), pp. 206–25.

156. To W. H. Watson, 26.4.1933

My dear Watson,

Thanks for your letter. It reached me in Vienna where I was busy dictating about 800 pages of my bl. philosophy. They contain all I want to say but *very* badly said and I have now begun to rewrite the whole business. When that'll be done I'll have it printed (provided that I'm alive). My lectures go on as usual, badly arranged and unintelligible to most of my pupils and there are very few pupils this term. There's nobody you know amongst them except Moore. I saw Drury just before the Easter vac. He is working very hard and at a thankless job. Townsend is teaching in a school and apparently getting on well. From Lee I haven't heard since about 4 months.

Postmark: Cambridge 26 Apr 1933. This letter is not signed but, being written on a compliments slip, ends with the printed words "With the Author's Compliments", no doubt humorously re-employed.

busy dictating – Possibly TS 213, "The Big Typescript" described in **197**, notes, or an earlier extract from his manuscript volumes, TS 211, of 770 pages. Both consist partly (the former almost entirely) of rearrangements of previously dictated material, such as that shown to Moore and Russell in 1930 (*Philosophische Bemerkungen*, ed. R. Rhees (Oxford: Blackwell, 1964)). See **127–9**.

157. To Kegan Paul, [after 20.5.1933]

KP–F JW

Dear Sirs,

In reply to your letter dated May 18th I am sorry to say I have forgotten what Mr Ramsey's corrections were and I should like to see them before the second edition goes into print. I certainly don't wish to make any further alterations.

There is another thing about which I wish to write to you. I don't know what demand there is for my book but from the fact that you are preparing a second edition and other indications I gather that it now sells fairily well. If I remember the terms of our aggreement all rights to the book where then assigned to you. But I wonder if under the circumstances you would not think it equitable to allow me a royalty on the second edition (and future editions if any). My reason for this suggestion as you will have understood, is that although I consider our original aggreement to have been perfectly fair since you were taking a considerable risk in publishing the book, it is now quite clear that the book is earning a profit.

I hope this suggestion will not strike you as improper.

A draft for a letter. See **160**.

KP – The publisher Kegan Paul.

FJW – Presumably Frederic John Warburg (1898–1981) publisher, at that time working for the house of Routledge & Kegan Paul.

158. To the Editor of *Mind* (G. E. Moore), 27.5.1933

Dear Sir,

I have been reading Mr. Braithwaite's article in the recently published book, Cambridge University Studies, with some alarm, in particular what he there represents as being my present views on questions of philosophy. I have been doing research in philosophy during the last four years, but have not published any of my work, except, at the very beginning of that period, a short (and weak) article in the Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society. Now had I published my thoughts in print I should not trouble you with this letter. For any serious reader could then look up what my views were in my own publication. As it is, if he is interested in what I think, his only source is Mr. Braithwaite's article. And therefore I must warn such a reader that I disclaim all responsibility for the views and thoughts which Mr. Braithwaite attributes to me. Part of his statements can be taken to be inaccurate representations of my views, others again clearly contradict them.

That which is retarding the publication of my work, the difficulty of presenting it in a clear and coherent form, a fortiori prevents me from stating my views within the space of a letter. So the reader must suspend his judgement about them.

Yours truly,
Ludwig Wittgenstein.

Cambridge,
27th May, 1933.

Braithwaite's article – "Philosophy", in Harold Wright (ed.), *Cambridge University Studies 1933* (London: Ivor Nicholson & Watson, 1933), pp. 1–32.

article in the Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society – "Some Remarks on Logical Form", *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, supplementary vol. 9 (1929), 162–71.

Braithwaite also wrote a letter which was published in the July number of *Mind* (42 (1933), 416):

> Dear Sir,
>
> Dr. Wittgenstein has been good enough to show me his letter published above. I should be sorry if it were thought that Dr. Wittgenstein was responsible for any of the statements in my article. I had hoped that my opening paragraph would make it clear that the article stated only what impression the various Cambridge philosophers had made upon me. But, since Dr. Wittgenstein fears that there may be some doubt as to his responsibility, I now regret not having explicitly cautioned the reader against accepting uncritically my account of views which have not been published by their authors in printed form.
>
> The extent to which I have misrepresented Dr. Wittgenstein cannot be judged until the appearance of the book which we are all eagerly awaiting.
>
> Yours truly,
> R. B. Braithwaite.

159. To G. E. Moore, [after 27.5.1933]

Saturday

Dear Moore

Enclosed please find the proof of my letter to Mind. I have made no corrections. Please read it through and see whether there is anything to be altered. I wonder whether the comma after "*Now*" in line 8 is necessary and that after "*print*". If not I'd rather leave them out. Also the comma after "*think*" three lines below seems to me not necessary.

Yours ever

Ludwig Wittgenstein

letter to Mind – The first two but not the third of the suggested alterations were made in the printed text, which may also be found in L. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Occasions*, ed. James C. Klagge and Alfred Nordmann (Indianapolis and Cambridge: Hackett, [1993]), p. 156.

160. To C. K. Ogden, 21.6.1933

Trinity College
Cambridge
21.6.33.

Dear Ogden,

On May the 20th I got a letter from Kegan Paul saying that the first edition of my book was now nearly exhausted and that they were about to print a new one. They mentioned in their letter certain corrections which Ramsey had made and I had authorised and asked whether I wished to make any further alterations. I replied on May 27th that I did not know what Ramseys corrections were and that I wanted to see them before the new edition went into print. I then did not hear from Kegan Paul until today when they write to me, would I "be good enough to return to them the corrected proofs of Tractatus L-Ph . . . These are now required urgently". Now this obviously makes no sense as they haven't sent me any proofs and some feeling warns me that they want to play a trick on me. So would you be so good to step in and help clear up this matter.

Yours sincerely
Ludwig Wittgenstein

corrected proof – For the corrections see the notes to **99** and **101** above and the article by C. Lewy there cited. The publishers wrote to Ogden on 27 June 1933 saying that they had received back the corrected proofs from Wittgenstein (which must therefore have been sent in the intervening days) and that they contained "a fair number of additional corrections" made by him: these may be those noted by Lewy as not being in Ramsey's copy of the first impression. All corrections are fairly easy to detect, since the technique of stripping-in then used resulted in a lighter impression than the unaltered text.

161. To G. E. Moore, [end October 1933]

Monday

Dear Moore,

I think I ought to let you know that I am not going to come to tea with you on Tuesdays. I ought to have written this to you 2 or 3 weeks ago and in fact I wrote a letter to you about a fortnight ago but destroyed it again. Then I left Cambridge for a week and postponed writing to you and forgot about it. Please forgive me my negligence.

I also want you to know that my reason for not coming is a lack of friendliness which you showed on two occasions, the second when we last met. (You weren't *un*friendly). Your behaviour then made me think that the way we used to meet wasn't quite the right expression of our actual relation. I know this is expressed very badly but you'll understand me.

If you will allow me occasionally to turn up at your at home after tea I'll do so.

Yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

So dated by Moore: Wittgenstein returned from a week's walking holiday on 23rd of that month (a Monday).

at home – Moore's "at homes" were occasions on which philosophical topics were discussed.

162. From C. L. Stevenson, 18.11.[1933]

59 Walker St.
Cambridge, Massachusetts, U.S.
November. 18th

Dear Mr. Wittgenstein

I have been in a somewhat unsettled state of mind, getting used both to a new country (for it seems almost that) and a new sort of philosophical jargon, and I have consequently postponed writing you, for a lack of anything definite to say.

I am not at all excited about the work I am doing here, but on the other hand it is tollerable, and will become much more interesting when I begin work on my thesis – possibly in February. For the moment I am preparing for an examination in which one is supposed to have a fairly intimate knowledge of the history of philosophy. The reading I must do, in consequence, is much too discursive for me to assimilate it, and I am always having to quarrel with a little voice which tells me that it isn't at all necessary for me to know the details of other people's confusions, when it is so immediately obvious that they are confusions.

[. . .]

I hope your are well, and that your work at Cambridge is satisfactory to you.

I always felt rather awkward in talking with you, toward the end of last year, because it seemed to me that you thought I was a bit insensitive and superficial in my attitude toward philosophy, and responded only half-heartedly, during our discussions of the second term, to your own intensity and sincerity. But I think this was more a defence, on my part, than anything else. Whatever you said, you said with such tremendous vigor and conviction, that I was always tempted to believe it without further ado, simply because of the strength of your personality. This of course would never have done. So in order to gain time – to let my ideas get themselves together in their own slow way, – I tended to take defence in a certain urbanity, which you certainly must have thought rather thin. But I seemed to be able to find no other alternative open. What is certainly the case, however, and what I would rather convince you of than anything else, is that I value the privilege of having known you much more than I can ever express. This is especially real to me lately, for I find in your personality a sort of armour against the petty egotism and purposelessness that always seems to abound in Academic circles.

Please extend my deepest regards to Professor Moore. Louise asks me to extend hers to you.

Sincerely,
Charles Stevenson

I am enclosing a quotation from Kant, which will interest you, in case you haven't read it. (Am compiling a lot of nonsense examples, of the more subtile sort, but shall not send them to you until I have found many others.)

C. L. Stevenson – (1908–79) An American who had studied with Moore and Wittgenstein, later Professor at Yale and Michigan, famous for the *The Emotive Meaning of Ethical Terms* (1937) and later writings on the same theme.

Kant – Wittgenstein admired Kant but was not blind to his absurdities. "Kant's style," he told Kreisel, "is not bad but mad" (communication to the editor).

163. To W. H. Watson, 11.12.1933

Dec. 11th

My dear Watson,

Thanks so much for your letter dated Oct. 22nd and please forgive me for replying so late. I was not feeling well the first fortnight of the term and very busy afterwards. I had done a fair amount of work during the long vac. and rather overworked myself. When I came up I found I was incapable of doing a stroke of work. So after some doubts I decided to take a week off and went for a walking tour preventing myself entirely from thinking of my work for the whole week. After returning here I found that I could work again though not very well but after another fortnight I was able to do proper work. Thank God! – I did not look at the Physical Review and won't do so because I must save my powers which are *very* small for my real work and not let things distract me which are neither rest nor really important.

Please don't send me your manuscript. I shouldn't be able to look at it. I should very much like to see you and discuss things with you, but *I'm no good at reading*! It strains me *enormously* and I get nowhere. As I say, I wish I could come over sometime and discuss things.

I am lecturing a good deal and have adopted a method which I think is the right one for me. I explain things to my pupils and then dictate to them short formulations of what we've been discussing and of the results. These are then typed and duplicated so that each man can get a clean copy. In case you should be interested to have a copy so as to see what we're doing just let me know.

I think that a man I've once met in Cambridge and thought *very nice indeed* has become Professor of Philosophy at McGill University. His name is McLenan (I don't know if I spell it right). Do you know him?

Please let me hear from you soon. I wish you and your family a happy Christmas and New Year.

Yours ever

Ludwig Wittgenstein

Postmark: Cambridge 11 Dec 1933.

your letter dated Oct. 22nd – Not found.

your manuscript – Clearly that of *On Understanding Physics* (see notes to **140** above).

These are then typed and duplicated – This will have been an early stage in the preparation of the Blue Book (see **166–7**).

McLenan – Presumably R. D. Maclennan, for many years a pillar of the McGill department (see also **168**).

164. To G. E. Moore, [December 1933]

Saturday

Dear Moore,

This is the estimate. None of my lectures is over 1200 words and if we have them printed on foolscap they will each cost 4/6 that's to say 20 copies will cost that. Now I don't know exactly how many lectures there will be as possibly I might decide to dictate three times a week next term instead of only twice as I did this term. I dictated only 10 times this term so on the whole there will be about 52 lectures this academic year at the most, and these will cost between 11 and 12 pounds. If we only print 15 copies of each lecture, and there is no earthly reason why we should have more, they'll cost 10% less i.e. *about* £10.

Yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

I wish you and Mrs Moore a happy Christmas and New Year.

Moore in his diary for 1933: "Wittg. doesn't come to me Tu[esday]s until Nov 28 when about asking Board to pay for copies of his lecture notes." The reference to Tuesdays is explained by **161** above. For the duplication see **165** and **166** below. Subsequently it was no doubt on Moore's recommendation that at the meeting of the Moral Science Faculty Board on 23 January 1934 "It was agreed to make a grant not exceeding £15 for the duplication of notes for the use of [Dr.Wittgenstein's] students for the present academical year."

165. To C. L. Stevenson, 22.12.1933

22.12.33.

Dear Stevenson,

(I hope you don't mind my waiving the "Mr") Thanks so much for your letter. I was very pleased to have it. I'm sorry you must do a lot of reading of the history of philosophy for it will hardly help you to clear up your own muddles. Really to understand other peoples thoughts or to learn from their confusions is *enormously* difficult, especially if they lived long ago and talked a philosophical language which isn't your own. The only thing to do is always to tell *yourself that you don't understand what exactly they were at*. If ever you've had a real thought yourself you'll know that it will be difficult for others to understand it exactly, and then you'll also know that it is difficult for you to understand other peoples thoughts. I know that, as a professor of philosophy, you've got to profess to understand what everyone meant when they said. . . . But you aren't a professor, and so just enjoy your freedom!

As to our discussions last year it is true that I sometimes felt a little worried about the development you'ld take in the future. I mean, whether you'ld stick to philosophy in a *really serious* way. For I know that the temptations to shallowness are immense unless you live very isolated; and even then they are immense. The general standard of accur[acy] and thoroughness of thought in philosophy is so *extremely* low that anyone who is capable of seeing through a few confusions in his neighbours' thoughts is easily led into thinking that he's allri[ght] as he obviously is no worse than many of the celebrated philosophers around him. I hope that you'll be able to carry a decent standard about with you, and not care a damn how badly other people do their job.

It was a great pleasure for me to read the kind words which you said about me in your letter. For, although they showd me that you *overestimate me enormously* yet they told me that I was of some use to you. And y[ou] cann't do anyone a greater favour than telling him that he is of some use.

Please let me hear from you again before long if you aren['t] too busy. I'll be interested in *everything* you may write.

Please remember me to Mrs Stev[enson.] I hope that the three of you are going to have a happy Christ[mas] and New Year.

Yours sincerely
Ludwig Wittgenstein

166. From H. S. M. Coxeter, 29.12.1933

Hoe
Gomshall
Surrey
Dec 29 '33.

Dear Wittgenstein,

I am sorry to trouble you again about such a mundane matter. But I hear that you have been given an estimate of £10 for the duplication of the year's lecture notes. That is, of course, good and cheap; but I do earnestly ask you to employ me instead, not merely because that will be cheaper still, but because a considerable part of the work is already done. When I was offered a Roneo Duplicator, latest Type, in good condition, for £8-10-0, I was so pleased that I bought it. And after the end of term, Mrs. Braithwaite and I had a lot of fun (and a lot of trouble) making it work. The result was twenty copies of your first six lectures, at an average cost of about four shillings per lecture (for paper, ink and stencil-cutting). Mrs. Braithwaite will submit these for your approval whenever you like. I hope you will forgive me for taking that liberty, and not imagine that I have "ulterior motives". If you decide to let us carry on, the machine itself will remain the property of the Moral Sciences Faculty, but will be lent to you and your pupils for as long as it is needed. Financially, this plan will not make much difference for the present year. But if, as we all hope, you consent to remain with us longer, the advantage next year will be great.

With all good wishes.

Sincerely
Donald Coxeter

Coxeter – Harold Scott Macdonald (hence "Donald") Coxeter (1907–2005), a mathematician from Trinity, later a distinguished Professor of Projective Geometry in Canada.

a considerable part of the work is already done – In a letter to Stevenson of 1 January 1934 Miss Ambrose (see biography below in comments to **176**) described her contact with Wittgenstein in the previous term as follows:

> And now about Wittgenstein. This year he's been in proper antics. The class started off too large, and remained so. After about two weeks, he decided he'd meet 5–7 people of his own choosing, twice a week. Fortunately this year Wittgenstein likes me, and we get on just fine. It's made a wonderful difference in Cambridge to me. At present I'm one of the chosen who go and wait for the oracle to speak. Mrs. Braithwaite, Skinner, Goodstein, Coxeter (mathematician of Trinity) and I came first, and later Mrs Knight and a chap named Martineau were allowed to join. The rest of the class was green with envy, and it was an awfully awkward mess, as there were some left whom Wittgenstein would have taught but for the fact that numbers seem to upset him. [. . .] this is what he does in the inner sessions: He discusses with us what he wants to say (he's talked about language games, as before) and then he dictates. And he makes an attempt to give a connected discussion. I should say that when the year is over we'll have the equivalent of a semi-official deliverance. At least he takes great pains with the English and one of us types off the notes for him, and they are corrected. Each time we meet with him we stay from $2^1/_2$–3 hours, and we're all limp but him. That's twice a week and then there's the other two hour lecture. The last week of term, he wasn't finished, so we met once more for $2^1/_2$ hours. And he still wasn't done so we met again for $3^1/_4$ hours. His criticisms and his analyses are as fine as ever. [. . .] I understand Wittgenstein is in a snag with his book. It's thought these sessions with us are also by way of clarifying his own difficulties.

The cutting of stencils will have been extra work undertaken by Coxeter and Mrs Braithwaite (Miss Masterman). Ambrose believed that Skinner influenced Wittgenstein against Coxeter from some motive of jealousy. Possibly the first and shorter of the two "Blue Books" is that produced by Coxeter and Mrs Braithwaite. In the course of this academic year, when Wittgenstein was not formally dictating (i.e. partly in "the other two hour lecture"), Ambrose and Mrs Braithwaite took further notes collected in a Yellow Book, largely published in *Wittgenstein's Lectures: Cambridge 1932–1935*.

1934

167. To H. S. M. Coxeter, [13.1.1934]

Dear Coxeter,

I very much disapprove of what you have done; particularly of the way you put me before a "fait accompli", in order to give me no choice. I don't yet know what I am going to do and I shan't decide until I have talked the matter over with a friend in whose judgement I can rely. I want you to know however that I would even go as far as resigning my lectureship if it turned out that as a lecturer I cannt keep my teaching clean, and free from a connection with journalism.

Yours sincerely
Ludwig Wittgenstein

This is a draft reply written on that blank space left in Coxeter's own letter (**166**). The date is calculated by Wittgenstein's return from Christmas at Vienna. It is not certain (but also not totally improbable) that such a reply was in fact sent.

a friend in whose judgement I can rely – Moore is certainly meant. His diaries show that Wittgenstein called on him and "talked about duplicator" – he had already raised the matter of the Faculty Board's paying for duplication with Moore on 28 November, for the outcome of which see notes to **164** above. Very probably Moore also smoothed matters over with Coxeter.

168. From W. H. Watson, 14.1.1934

January 14th 1934.
3575 Durocher St.
Montreal.

My Dear Wittgenstein,

Thanks very much for your letter and good wishes. When the former arrived I was considering seriously that I should try to find out whether you were still alive and if so in Cambridge! However your letter assured me that you are very much alive, and especially I was interested about this new method you have adopted in your lectures. I shall be very glad to receive a copy of your duplicated notes for your classes. Perhaps someday we may be fortunate enough to have someone attend your lectures with sufficient knowledge of shorthand so that a complete record of what you said will be available!

I have not seen McLennan since receiving your letter so I have not yet been able to convey your good opinion of him (!): he has been ill, but is now recovered. I have found him very nice – except that he suggested that I have been "indoctrinated" by you. McLennan has the reputation on the Staff of being very serious, and he has evidently complained bitterly about this winter which has been particularly cold.

Your answer to my request to look at my manuscript was not unexpected: I shall respect your wishes but I'm sorry that the substitute that you suggest, namely that I should come over to Cambridge and discuss things with you, is quite impossible this year on financial grounds. We are still recovering from last summer' visit and now the exchange rate is much less favourable. I should like very much to visit Cambridge again in order to ask you a number of questions: for it seems unlikely that you will ever discuss philosophy in a letter.

[. . .]

We get little news of Austria but what there is rather depressing. I take it that affairs are in a pretty bad way there and that life is far from pleasant for anyone. The one bright spot on the map today seems to be England.

I'll be glad to hear from you soon and I hope that you are keeping well and cheerful,

Yours ever,
W. H. Watson

An answer to **163** above.

McLennan – Maclennan's name is here differently misspelt.

my manuscript – No doubt that of *On Understanding Physics* (see notes to **140** above).

169. To P. Sraffa, [19.1.1934]

Monday

Dear Sraffa,

When we last met I said that I was going to call on you sometime, and I want to explain why I haven't done so yet. I have just now very little or practically no power to spare, my work takes up what I have. Now you know that the conversations which we had in recent times (meaning roughly the last 6 or 9 months) were always a very great strain for me; and I'm sure for you too. This in itself wouldn't matter but I think it is clear that, for the present at any rate, we have given each other all that we can give. I have learnt an enormous amount from you in the conversations we had during the past 2 or 3 years; but I can't say that I have learnt much from you in our last conversations. Not that I've learnt all you can teach! But I've learnt most of what at present can be assimilated by me. That's why our last conversations haven't been profitable. Now this, I think, is no ground for never meeting again; but it is the reason why, until I feel more powerful, I avoid having a conversation with you.

Yours,

Ludwig Wittgenstein

Faint pencilled date by Sraffa. In October 1933, to judge from both men's diaries, regular conversations with Sraffa stopped. There were a couple of meetings in December 1933 and an attempt to conduct discussion with the aid of memoranda in Lent Term 1934 (see **170–5** below; some dates are not absolutely certain). Thereafter regular meetings seem to have resumed only in Easter Term (May) 1935.

170. To P. Sraffa, [31.1.1934]

Wed.

Dear Sraffa,

The following are some remarks I've put down on the topic of our last conversation. I hope they won't be too disconnected and I hope that you'll read them to the end.

You said: "The Austrians *can* do most of the things the Germans did". I say: How do you know? What circumstances are you taking into account if you say they can? "He *can* remove the wedding ring from his finger". True, it's not too heavy and it doesn't stick to his finger. *But*: he may be ashamed of doing it; his wife may not allow it, etc.

You say: "Learn from what has happened in Italy". But what should I learn from them? I don't know exactly how things happened in Italy. So the only lesson I could draw from it is, that things one doesn't expect sometimes happen.

I ask: how will this man whose face I cann't imagine in a rage look like when he gets into a rage? And *can* he get into a rage? What shall I say when I see him in a rage? Not only "ah, so he could get into a rage after all", but: "so this is the *way he* can be in a rage; so this is how it connects up with his former appearance."

It is a fact that I can easily immagine some features turning angry (remember what I said about Germans in Bohemia) and not others. This of course doesn't mean that I deny that the latter can look angry too; but I am puzzled as to the *kind* of anger they are capable of. And perhaps I will make a conjecture about the sort of anger I imagine it to be.

You say to me: "If a man is in a rage the muscles a, b, c of his face contract. This man (Austria) has the muscles a, b, c, so why shouldn't they contract. In fact if you Wittgenstein wish to know what he will look like in a rage just imagine him with these muscles contracted. What will Austria look like when it turns Nazi? There will be no socialist party, there won't be jewish judges, etc, etc, etc. That's what it'll look like." I reply: This gives me no picture of a face; appart from the fact that I don't know enough about the working of things to know whether all these changes which you point out will *happen* together. For I understand what it means to say that the muscles a, b, c, will contract, but what will become of the many muscles etc. between them. Cann't the contraction of the one in this particular face prevent the contraction of the others? Do you know how in this particular case things interact?

You may say: Surely the only way to tell the future physiognomy is to know more and more exactly the contractions etc. of all (not only the main) muscles.

I say: I don't think this is the only way; there is another one, although the two ways meet. I may ask a *physiologist* what the face will be like, but also a *painter*. The two will give different answers (the painter by drawing the angry face) although if they both are correct they will agree. Of course I know that painters have to study anatomy. *I* want to know the painters answer, and I also want to know what the physiologist can tell me to check the painters answer.

I am interested to know what phrases the Austrians will use when they'll have turned Nazi. Supposing their patriotism is only *talk* then I'm just interested *in their future talk*.

I wish to say one more thing: I think that your fault in a discussion is this: YOU ARE NOT HELPFUL! I am like a man inviting you to tea to my room; but my room is hardly furnished, one has to sit on boxes and the teacups stand on the floor and the cups have no handles, etc etc. I hustle about fetching anything I can think of to make it possible that we should have tea together. *You* stand about with a sulky face; say that you cann't sit down on a box, and cann't hold a cup without a handle, and generally make things difficult. – At least that's how it seems to me.

Yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

Pencilled dating by Sraffa very faint but can only be as shown. The nazification of Austria was indeed threatened but the February Putsch of that year in fact led to their establishment of an authoritarian though not Nazi regime (and indeed to the suppression of the socialist – properly the "social democratic" – party).

our last conversation – No earlier meeting in 1934 is recorded in either man's pocket diary but **173** below implies that some were at least arranged.

171. Notes for P. Sraffa, [21.2.1934]

I think that writing down my arguments might possibly be the only way of making it worthwhile expressing them at all. – For correct or incorrect I believe they are in *most* cases worth hearing and properly considering & the mere fact that I know they are wasted on you when I just *say* them fills me with a kind of despair while I'm stating them. It's like trying *hard* to fill a barrel which has no bottom.

I don't mean to say that I'm *sure* that you get something out of an argument of mine if it's written down. But it's just conceivable; for you've got time then to do with it what you please and you won't throw it away as easily as if you just hear it.

Is it a correct argument to say that the Germans cannot live contentedly or prosperously in a republic because they are a monarchist people? One could deal that argument a blow by asking, "wouldn't you have said exactly the same of the French people under Louis XIV?" This argument reminds me of something apparently quite unconnected with it. If one asks the question "why does fashion (say the fashion of dressing) change", most people would answer: Because the taste changes. They would say people dress as they do because they now *like* to dress this way. But this, in most cases, is wrong or it means nothing. People dress as they do for lots of different reasons: because they see other people dressing in this way, because their tailor just makes the suit as he does and they would have dressed differently had he made the dress according to a different model. Even the tailors who design the new models can't be simply said to design the ones they do because they like them. They may think them more suitable or instinctively design them as they do etc. etc. Of course it happens that a man chooses between different models, likes one better than the others and has his suit made accordingly. Now the fallacy which I want to point out is this, – to think every action which people do is *preceded by* a particular state of mind of which the action is the outcome. So they will not be contented to say that the tailors draw one model this year and a slightly different one next year and that this has all sorts of reasons, but they will say that there was a state of mind, the taste, the liking which changed; and regard the act of designing the model as a secondary thing (the state of mind being the primary one). As though the changed taste did not amongst other things consist just in designing what they did design. The fallacy could be described by saying that one presupposes a mental reservoir in which the real causes of our actions are kept. Now this connects up with our first question because one is tempted to think of such a reservoir, I.E. "the mentality of a people" and when one speaks of changes which the Government of a country might undergo one imagines this thing, the mentality, not to alter.

Supposing one asked the question: "Is a King possible without a crown?" Here one might be tempted to say "No, because it doesn't fit the character of a King not to have a crown, or it doesn't fit into the physiognomy of Royalty if the King hasn't a crown." But the answer to this is really "Well that physiognomy will just change and there will be Kings without crowns.

If one says, "Germany can't change into a proper Republic because this is not like the Germans not like their physiognomy as I see it. The fallacy in this argument is, I suppose, that one then (in a sense unconsciously) presupposes that *a certain Kind* of *characteristics* (which forms the mentality or is its expression) won't change. The fallacy roughly speaking is to think that if the unexpected things happened the people would have no face, NO physiognomy.

If I had observed a body moving in a circle and it had just completed its first round like this



then I might be so strongly impressed by this picture that it would seem to me impossible that the body when it continues its movement should move in anything but the same circular path again. For, I should argue, its motion has the physiognomy of a circle. But suppose it continued this way



then of course this hasn't the old physiognomy but a very simple new one and as soon as I see it I will again be tempted to think that now the body must obviously move on in the shape of an eight

It will therefore be correct to say, as you did: "If you want to know what will happen with Germany, don't argue from its physiognomy and things like this." But not because this physiognomy is too *vague*. Not at all. But because in arguing from the physiognomy one argues from a prejudice that certain things will *not change*, although there is no reason to suppose they won't.

We store away impressions in our mind, certain standards (such as that of the King with a crown) and are inclined to think that everything we may meet must conform with these standards. But if we met with a Kingdom in which the King has no crown we would soon enough put this in our collection of standards too.

These are two documents of which the second is the putting into practice of the first. The second is dated in pencil by Sraffa and was actually written, evidently from Wittgenstein's dictation, by Francis Skinner (the possibility of dictation is mentioned in **173**).

172. Notes by P. Sraffa, [23.2.1934]

As to the method of our discussions (remarks or arguments) I have this to say. I must have long stories, not short ones; I must try to stick to a point & not saunter from one to the other, apparently disconnected; I am much too slow for that, and cannot find the hidden connection. Also I cannot be content with hints or allusions (or things which cannot be laid down black or white), I must have it all thrashed out.

But it is no use laying down conditions to which anyhow we could not stick; if in practice it works out in a way that is intolerable to either of us, then we shall give it up.

Fashion, Taste, liking, reservoir – excellent (I could not have put it so well) as far as it goes. I have further objections to the answer criticised (why does fashion change? because tastes change). But then you go off the track you had laid down. King – – – Germany – physiognomy – the fallacy is to assume phys. does not change. *No*, the fallacy is to suppose that phys. is the reservoir of primary changes. What we want is not a reservoir of unchangeable things, but one of things that change first. This is the point. I think that the reservoir must contain definite concrete things, preferably measurable or ascertainable with some certainty, independently of my likes and dislikes. Phys. are certainly not that; they are made up of my prejudices, sympathies etc; & I know by experience that my view of the phys. changes always after – long after – the events I was trying to predict happened.

I want a reservoir of things the changes of which will be visible first, or more accurately, or certainly or more easily and (above all) such that I may be able to ascertain as more dispassionately (indep. as far as possible from my wishes, prejudices, sympathies, habits, etc); things of the sort of the quantity of coal produced in Germany (if it is relevant), not of the spirit of the German people. This is what I tried to describe (inaccurately) as "vague".

Then, having criticized the common answers, you give your own. "People dress as they do for all sorts of reasons" you say.

But this answer is of no use to anyone; if I am a tailor who asks the question with a view to preparing dresses for next season, I want you to point to me a thing, which is visible to me now, and to give me a rule which will enable me to tell, from the looks of that thing, what will be the dress people will buy next season.

Or a silk manufacturer if he asks that question may have in view how he can influence fashion so as to increase the use of silk; and to him you will have to point to something which he can handle, e.g., you may say: fashion depends on advertising, in such and such a way.

Of course, in the circumstances of the tailor or the silkman, there may not be an answer to his question – e.g. if he cannot go to Paris, or has no money for advertising.

But in the answers you must point to things which are dependable; If you said to the tailor, "look at the spirit of the people, when it changes, dresses will come into harmony with it". Would this rule be of any use to the tailor? Would it be as much

use as if you said: the newspapers have been full of Tutankhamen and the fashion will be copies of Egyptian clothes, but not of silk because the crop has failed and is too dear and adapted so that mechanical looms can produce them, and of a darker shade so that they don't get too dirty in London etc.

The dates of these two documents are conjectural but they are clearly a response to the two documents in **171** above. The exchange is echoed in the *The Blue and Brown Books*, ed. R. Rhees (Oxford: Blackwell, 1958), II. 6, p. 143 (see also **174** below):

> 6. There is a kind of general disease of thinking which always looks for (and finds) what would be called a mental state from which all our acts spring as from a reservoir. Thus one says, "The fashion changes because the taste of people changes". The taste is the mental reservoir. But if a tailor to-day designs a cut of dress different from that which he designed a year ago, can't what is called his change of taste have consisted, partly or wholly, in doing just this?

But for the precise dating by Sraffa of the second part of **171** this echo would have suggested that the interchange (including **174** and **171** above) should be dated to 1935, when the second part of the Brown Book was being dictated. On the other hand there is a thematic resemblance to **169** above.

173. To P. Sraffa, 27.2.[1934]

Tuesday

Dear Sraffa,

I expected you on Sunday. When you hadn't turned up till 6 I thought of looking into your room to see what was the matter but I didn't feel very well myself and so stayed at home. – I wrote a long letter 10 pages in answer to yours which I got on Saturday. I wrote it in pencil and so badly that you couldn't read it; also parts are only sketched. If I can I'll write it out properly (or dictate it). Just now I can't as I'm not well (nerves and bladder).

I'm afraid I cann't see you next Sunday as someone is coming to visit me. But Sunday March 11th would do me. Shall I come to your room?

Yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

Only possible year in which 27 February a Tuesday and 11 March a Sunday. See also **175**. The long letter that was promised (and actually written: see **175** below) has not yet come to light.

174. Notes by P. Sraffa, [4.3.1934]

The error is to regard intuition as a provisional substitute for science: "when you will produce a satisfactory science, I shall give up intuitions". – Now the two things cannot be set against one another they are on entirely different planes. Intuitions are a way of acting, science one of knowing (Physician)

Actions do not require a rational justification – they are *objects* of explanation.

You are trying to rationalise intuition[s] – and say they are a pisaller for science.

This remark of Sraffa's is echoed in the *Brown Book*, p. 143, very shortly before the similar echoing of **172**. The relevant passage runs:

> It is no act of insight, intuition, which makes us use the rule as we do at the particular point of the series. It would be less confusing to call it an act of decision, though this too is misleading, for nothing like an act of decision must take place, but possibly just an act of writing or speaking. And the mistake which we here and in a thousand similar cases are inclined to make is labelled by the word "to make" as we have used it in the sentence "It is no act of insight which makes us use the rule as we do", because there is an idea that "something must make us" do what we do. And this again joins on to the confusion between cause and reason. We need have no reason to follow the rule as we do. The chain of reasons has an end.

175. To P. Sraffa, 11.3.1934

Dear Sraffa,

I have been too exhausted to write out my letter to you in the last two weeks. This morning I did it (with a few alterations).

On the other hand I think I ought not to come to tea with you but be in the open air all the afternoon, as I've got to lecture tomorrow and am pretty nearly at the end of my force. I cann't do anything which at all strains me unnecessarily. I did not let you know before now as I intended to come to you, until this morning after writing the letter I felt that it wouldn't be wise to do it.

I'm going down next Saturday and I should want very much to see you before then, if it's possible. I shall try to come to you next Friday at teatime to have a chat and say good bye. If this doesn't suit you please let me know.

Yours,

Ludwig Wittgenstein

Sraffa's pencilled dating. Sraffa's pocket diary shows a meeting with Wittgenstein for 4.30 on 11 March (that here cancelled) and another for the same time on 16 March (a Friday). The rewritten letter is presumably the letter now lost referred to in **173**.

176. From A. Ambrose, 22.6.1934

39 Worple Road
Wimbledon, S.W.19
June 22, 1934.

Dear Dr. Wittgenstein,

I'm most awfully glad to write you that my studentship has been renewed, and that I shall be with you again next year. Also, all my worries about money are clearing up. The £150 from the studentship will keep me next year, and Mrs. Norman writes me that she has obtained the money I deposited with Mr. Norman, and would rather pay it all now than in small sums at intervals. So I can manage through the summer on that – though in fact Mr. Braithwaite's loan would have done as well. That you and Professor Moore and Mr. Braithwaite all offered to help me with a loan during the summer was a bit too much – it's the thing I'll want to do for my students if I ever get to teach, but yet when that goodness comes to me it's like another first experience that human beings actually can be fine. And I am thankful.

Poor Mrs. Norman is in a bad way. She writes me that she will probably lose her home, and must find a job at once. Quite evidently a financial tangle was the cause of the suicide.

Enclosed are the notes of the last four lectures, which I typed while in camp with Mrs. Braithwaite. I've not had a breathing spell long enough to correct them for typographical errors, but am hoping they're not too bad. Life was very hectic down there, but I did enjoy it and it was good to get out of Cambridge. We slept out in tents on a hill from which we could look across to the downs. I'd never tried the primitive life in extremis since I was a child. This summer I shall be around Salzburg for a time while the music festival is on, and I shall walk some in the Tyrol. I'm looking forward to the walking, as I've never done it for more than a day. I think I may come to Vienna from there. (I can see you shaking your head and saying I shouldn't. But I'd like being there once for a little time at least, and again I should like to walk a bit.) If you have any suggestions either concerning a place to stay or walks to take I'd be very glad to have them. And if I find a nice place perhaps you'd have tea or dinner there with me. I shall be there sometime in August. But if you've any suggestions, I'd be glad to hear from you at the only address I now know: bei Fr. Doktor Hoechstetter, Liebigstr. 28/III, München. I'm leaving for there tomorrow morning, and shall be there until July 7–9.

A year ago tonight you came to my house for dinner. Next year I shall again be managing meals alone and have lodgings alone in the top flat of Braithwaite's house; so I hope you'll come again, and we shall have American food. Whatever that's like, you'll at least be saved from Lyons'. What came three years ago tonight seems now hardly a part of my life. It's a queer anniversary, this. I keep wondering if when I get back to America I'll be able to begin a life which bridges this gap.

I didn't tell you that Belmont and I got right with each other shortly after I had dinner with you. I decided that judgment of him by his attitude to Prof. Moore mightn't be quite fair since there was no telling what reasons other than natural ones I had for being upset by it; so I asked him to tea, which I couldn't then do naturally,

without being a hypocrite, and I laid before him sincerely what reasons I could for my attitude towards him – which I of course knew he was sensitive enough to observe. I felt enormously better about him after that tea and I think he felt better, too. Anyway I liked him afterwards. And he became even nicer that last term. I think being with you did him a great deal of good. I think he's suffered and been hurt a little too much.

I've enclosed here Skinner's notes, just in case they might be wanted. This last lecture sounds as though you'd quit in the middle. I should think we'd have about the same class next year, to continue, provided you will continue as before. I'm hoping that next year you'll talk some more about proofs in mathematics, induction, general and existential propositions. I have with me now Hilbert and Bernays' new book on foundations. The start seems pretty much of a muddle – that muddle about mathematical and meta-mathematical languages.

It is well past midnight and I must quit. Thank you again for the kindness of your offer to help me this summer. And I shall look forward to seeing you, if not in August, then in the fall. Please get a bit of rest during this vacation.

Yours most sincerely,
Alice Ambrose

Ambrose – Later Alice Ambrose Lazerowitz, an American pupil of Wittgenstein's, was one of those to whom he dictated his notes. For the Blue Books (there were originally two fascicles) see notes to **166** above. The Brown Book he dictated to her and Skinner alone in the academic year 1934–5.

Mr Norman – A tailor on Sydney Street, he and his wife were good friends of the Moores. Ambrose lodged with them in 1933–4 (letter from Ambrose to Stevenson, 1 January 1934) at least until the tragedy here alluded to.

Hoechstaetter – Ambrose later told Stevenson that her landlady was a relation of Wittgenstein's, who had indeed some relations called Hochstetter.

Belmont – David Belmont, a Californian mathematician visiting Cambridge and attending philosophical gatherings whom Miss Ambrose thought clever but arrogant. He spoke to the Moral Science Club on "The Symbolic Theory of Deduction" (9 February 1934). Wittgenstein's correspondent Taylor met him in California in 1939, where he was studying to be an accountant. See **247** below.

Skinner – Francis Skinner who came up to Trinity in 1930 was Wittgenstein's principal friend and companion until his death in 1941. The two shared lodgings in East Rd (see **207**) when Wittgenstein was not housed in college. Skinner gave up mathematics (he had been a Wrangler and a Research Student) to live and think along Wittgensteinian lines.

Hilbert and Bernays – D. Hilbert and P. Bernays, *Grundlagen der Mathematik* (Berlin: Springer, 1934).

177. To A. Ambrose, 18.8.[1934]

Hochreit Post Hohenberg
Nieder Österreich
18.8.

Dear Miss Ambrose,

Thanks so much for your letter which I got almost 2 months ago. As soon as I got it I sat down to answer it and wrote about half a page. Then I was interrupted, from that moment the planets were adverse and something always kept me from writing. – I needn't say that I was very pleased indeed to hear that you had got your scholarship; though I never doubted that you would get it. – I am looking forward to dining with you and I'm sure the american food will be good; but I must say that I don't mind a bit going to Lyon's every day. In fact I'm fond of the place. – I was glad to hear that you had talked to Belmont. It was the *right* thing to do and good for all concerned.

I hope to talk about the foundations of Math. next year though I certainly shan't begin with it. I wonder what our class will be like!

I'm afraid I shan't see you before autumn as I'm not in Vienna in August except for a few days when I shall be very busy.

I hope this letter will reach you before October.

Yours very sincerely
Ludwig Wittgenstein

178. To G. E. Moore, [10.9.1934]

Monday

Dear Moore,

Thanks for your letter. I wish to God you would attend my classes! It would give me ever so much more of a chance to make things clear, to you *and* to others. Would you come if I promised you to provide a very comfortable chair and tobacco and pipecleaners? I came up a week ago and am leaving for Ireland on Friday and shall be back again on October 1st. I shall try to see you on Tuesday Oct. 2nd, i.e. I'll call and see if you are in. – I'm extremely sorry about Priestley!

Yours
Ludwig Wittgenstein

Dated by Moore.

classes – Moore seems not to have attended Wittgenstein's classes in 1933–4 or 1934–5. For the former year Miss Ambrose explains (in a letter to Stevenson) that he was giving an extra lecture course himself and simply had no time to do so.

Priestley – See note on **117**. Priestley was to leave for Melbourne at the end of 1934.

179. To C. L. Stevenson, 10.9.1934

Trinity Coll. Camb.
10.9.34.

Dear Stevenson,

Thanks so much for your letter, dated June 5th. I'm glad you passed your written exams and I'm sure you did well in your oral ones as well. I hope you'll enjoy teaching; but if you're any good at it I think your enjoiment will be kept down somewhat by the discovery of how *enormously* difficult it is to get clear enough about a thing to be able to explain it to another man without cheating him and yourself. I mean that if you don't find it *overwhelmingly* difficult to teach philosophy you won't be much good at it. For I imagine that "rock-bottom honesty", as you call it, is damn difficult to acquire.

As to "bringing your own fragmentary ideas into something like a coherent order", I thought there would be time enough for that when you were 60. I thought it would be heaps if you could write a few decent fragments. One day you'll see that this is true. – Last academic year was a great strain but I've taken a good rest now for almost a month and so ought to be able to do some work again soon. I've been to Austria for 6 weeks and come back here a week ago. In a few days I shall be going to Ireland to stay a fortnight with Drury whom I suppose you'll remember. Then I shall come back here for good. I wonder what my class will be like and what my own head will be like. – Miss Ambrose has got a research scholarship for the next year. She has been doing very well indeed.

Please remember me to Mrs Stevenson and to Cooley if you see him.

Yours very sincerely
Ludwig Wittgenstein

Let me hear from you again before long.

Cooley – John Cooley, a visiting student at Cambridge who later taught Philosophy at Columbia University.

180. To W. H. Watson, 25.11.1934

Sunday
25th Nov.

My dear Watson,

I ought to have written to you roughly 9 months ago and have, I think, begun two letters and destroyed them again. Besides I have thought of writing to you roughly every second or third day. But writing becomes the more difficult the longer you postpone it. I am very busy just now. I have two pupils 5 times a week for 4 hours on end from 9:30 to 1:30, with a pause in which we drink coffee. In these hours I mainly dictate to them and what I dictate may one day be published, or may not. Besides this little class I have got my official one for three hours a week. We have a very nice and good man here just now, he is lecturer in philosophy and comes to my classes. His name is Wisdom. He works very hard in my classes and is good and agreeable in discussion and thereby a great help both for me and the other pupils. I thank God that I am able to work hard again, for from the middle of August to the beginning of October I felt utterly slack and incapable of holding on to a single decent thought. It was a rotten time. The one good thing about it was that I spent 2 weeks of it with Skinner (whom perhaps you remember) and Drury in Ireland. I hope I shall hear from you before long, though it's true that I don't deserve it.

Have you heard that Priestley leaves Cambridge? He has been made permanent Vice Chancellor of the University at Melbourne. It's a terrible loss for Cambridge and a very bad one for me too. For I'm very fond of him!

With the very best wishes

Yours ever
Ludwig Wittgenstein

Postmark: Cambridge 25 Nov 19[34] (the only possible year in which this date was a Sunday).

two pupils . . . I mainly dictate to them – Francis Skinner and Alice Ambrose: see **176** and **182**.

181. To R. E. Priestley, 11.12.1934

11.12.1934

Dear Priestley,

Please forgive me for pestering you with something when you have already trouble enough. But the case is important and I know of nobody who could advise me about it but you. – Miss Alice Ambrose, my pupil, has got to write a thesis in order to get a job at Harvard next Autumn. For this purpose the thesis must be ready by next *October*. Now it would help her a good deal if she could get a Cambridge Ph.D., but for this purpose the thesis ought to be ready by next *April*. – Now, although it is possible that she might by April get something together which will do for a Ph.D., I'm certain that she can't by then produce a really *good* thesis. And, what is more important, her working feverishly (as she would have to work) at this thesis will prevent her from learning in the rest of this academic year what she ought to learn, and is really here to learn.

Now, I suppose, there would be no serious trouble if it were not for the oral examination. For she could send in her thesis whenever she had it ready, say in Autumn, and would then get her Ph.D. at some later date. But she has neither money nor time to come back here from America for an oral examination. She is, of course, in rather a desperate state about all this. For she herself feels that if she has to do the thesis for April it couldn't be done really well as it ought, and that giving all her time to her thesis would take it away from her most important object, i.e. that of *learning* whatever she could as long as she is in Cambridge.

I wonder if anything could be done to help her. Possibly you could be so kind to tell me, when we see each other on Thursday, what I could do.

Yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

In this, his last year at Cambridge, Priestley was Secretary-General of the Faculties.

when you already have trouble enough – Presumably on account of his impending move to Australia (see **180**).

a Cambridge Ph.D. – For what actually happened in this regard see **186–8** and notes.

1935

182. From C. L. Stevenson, 15.1.1935

59 Walker St.,
Cambridge, Massachusetts, U.S.A.
January 15, 1935.

Dear Wittgenstein,

It was a great pleasure to receive your last letter. You have a direct way of talking that somehow puts new life into me. I should have answered sooner, but have been in the midst of my first teaching, and writing my thesis. Not that this didn't literally give me any *time*, but it has kept me in a state of mind that's no good for letter writing.

[. . .]

It *is* difficult, as you say, to "make anything clear in philosophy without cheating both the student and yourself". But I wish all difficulties were as decent as this one. The gratification of even half way meeting the difficulty is so immense that it makes any failures seem only temporary. I have had the advantage of writing my thesis on ethics, which I was also teaching, so that I was able to throw all my energies into every topic I took up. Doubtless I was often unclear, but there were times when I seemed to make people see points that I simply know are important; and then I felt like a god. These times have been few – yes, damned few – but they are enough to make me look forward to being of some use to people later on. I have learned over again what you so often said, and practiced in your classes – that clarity is almost all a matter of giving examples. So I have saturated myself with examples, almost dreamed examples. Beginning students don't understand any other language, and I profit by the examples as much as they.

[. . .]

I received a letter from Alice Ambrose, recently, who said that you were encouraged about the progress of your work. This is splendid news . . . She said also that she and Skinner had been taking dictations from you, which have been put into type-written form. Now could I *please* have a copy of this? There is really nothing that I would like more, if only you are willing to entrust me with work that (I assume) is not in any final form. If there are only a few copies, then I would gladly return one to you, after I had had time to read it. Or if I may have one to keep, I should be extremely grateful. (I should of course be glad to pay any expenses involved.) I *must* have a copy in some way. Please be kind enough to grant me this privilege. I have just written Alice Ambrose that I want a copy, so if you are willing that I should have one, and if you are too busy to send one, perhaps you could have her send it. I'm sure she would be glad to.

[. . .]

Sincerely,
Charles Stevenson

I have been playing Bach a great deal, and feel that I am gradually purging myself of sentimental irrelevancies, so that I make it sound like something. There is a whole world of inspiration in his music.

a letter from Miss Ambrose – Evidently not that quoted in notes to **166** above but a subsequent one in which she must have described the dictation of the Brown Book (1934–5).

183. To A. Ambrose, 17.1.1935

Thursday
Jan. 17 1935

Dear Miss Ambrose,

I still feel very uncertain about tomorrow but I don't want to put you off and I want to make you a proposal: Could you come at 9.30 as usual and bring some work along with you, perfectly prepared just to work on quietly in case I find that I can't dictate or explain. I say, bring some work along, because reading my german M.S. isn't quite the right thing; it's only a makeshift, for you can't properly understand it without spending lots of time on it, and also the thought that you are reading it and puzzled by it makes me feel sort of nervous when I sit there. If I have proposed something which you don't quite like, please don't do it *for me*. On the other hand, if you like doing it this way I should be very pleased.

Yours very sincerely
Ludwig Wittgenstein

P.S. This signature is worth £100.

dictate or explain – As well as coming to Wittgenstein with Skinner for the dictation of the Brown Book Ambrose also came alone for instruction on the philosophy of mathematics (as envisaged in letter **186** below) and (as shown by this letter) to take dictation.

my german M.S. – Wittgenstein is probably referring to the mathematical sections of the Big Typescript TS 213 (see **197** below). There is a fascicle of just these among his papers, which bears signs of separate use and circulation. The top section is entitled "Grundlagen der Mathematik". A transcription, with some editing, in Gabelsberger shorthand is to be found among F. Waismann's papers.

184. To P. Sraffa, [17.3.1935]

Sunday evening

Dear Sraffa

I wish to try to formulate what it is that irritates you about the thinking of Cambridge people and of me in particular. Couldn't one say that you feel something of this sort: Here are people who try to speak in a queer way "impartially" about things, they pretend to be able to slip out of their own skins and they speak as though they could understand everybody's feelings, wishes, tendencies etc. It is as though actors forgot that they weren't really all the people they impersonated. – When they talk of the claims of different nations they either try to take up the position of a God, impartial, etc.; or if they take sides they have a theory as well which shows them that their side is the only side, and without this theory they wouldn't dare to take sides.

This, by the way, was what I wished to tell you by my simile about the three religious people. The application of my simile was: You are like, say, a Greek Orthodox who sais: "I like a real protestant – who entirely disagrees with me – better than a man who sais that he is religious and can understand both the protestant and me."

The only thing that I should say to all this is: Every way of thinking is all right as long as it isn't stupid. That is: the question is only if in my own way I go far enough. If I do, it'll lead me out of the thick forest. I'm only afraid of going half way. And I am really afraid of doing so. My way of thinking is all right and I thank God for having given it to me; a different question is whether I make use of what I got in the right way. And in fact I know that I'm not doing so . . .

Text taken from Catalogue 683 of the Berlin auction house Stargardt where this letter was offered for sale on 22 March 2006. In all the letter was $2^{3}/_{4}$ pages long: the text here gives all that was reproduced or reported in the catalogue. The auction resulted in sale to a purchaser who wished to remain anonymous.

Pencil date added by Sraffa. The only meeting between the two in March 1935 shown in the diaries of either was on 1 March at 4.30 p.m.

185. From R. E. Priestley, 26.3.1935

The University of Melbourne
Melbourne, 26th March, 1935

Dear Wittgenstein,

Very many thanks for your letter. It was good to see your writing again. I have often thought of you and that not only at breakfast time on Tuesday mornings.

[. . .]

I know that you will be missing me, but I hope that you will not be missing me too much, and I was awfully pleased to hear that you were in touch with Loewe and Bachtin, and that Wisdom, the new University lecturer in Moral Science has proved to be congenial and useful.

[. . .]

Yours ever,
R. Priestley

breakfast time on Tuesday mornings – Priestley was accustomed to entertain (among others) graduate students and visiting polar explorers at breakfast, and his diaries (shown to the present editor) spoke of breakfast with Wittgenstein as a regular thing. They would often talk of the Antarctic, never of philosophy. A couple of the many "Priestley" entries in Wittgenstein's own diaries are at a suitable hour (10 or 9.30) and of course not all meetings may have been noted.

Loewe – Fritz Loewe (1895–1974), a refugee from Germany, a meteorologist and an Arctic explorer, who later followed Priestley to Melbourne. It is interesting that both new friends were foreigners, like many of Wittgenstein's associates (not disciples) at this time.

Bachtin – Nicholas Bachtin (1894–1950), brother of the literary theorist Mikhail. He fought as a volunteer in the First World War in the Russian army and on the White side in the civil war, though his sympathies later swung to the Red side. He also joined the French Foreign Legion. After a Cambridge PhD (1932–5) he taught Classics (later Linguistics), ending up in Birmingham. See further notes to **205** below.

Wisdom. – John (A. J. T.) Wisdom (1904–93). Educated at Cambridge, he returned there as a Lecturer in 1934. He succeeded to Wittgenstein's chair after von Wright (but was not considered at the time of von Wright's election). See **267** below for Wittgenstein's wish to have Wisdom as a friend in the department.

186. From A. Ambrose, 16.5.[1935]

58 Bateman St.
Cambridge
May 16

Dear Dr. Wittgenstein,

I went to see Prof. Moore this morning about a situation which has arisen about a job for next year, after which we discussed the matter between you and me. I told Prof. Moore I would write you.

First of all, you will I think be pleased to hear that I had a telegram this morning from the University of Michigan offering a position for a year teaching logic. Last night I had an encouraging letter form the university of which I told Frances, where there may be an opening soon for a permanent position. I do not want to lose this for the temporary post now offered at Michigan; but in any case I'm assured, quite unexpectedly, for next year. I write you so as to save you the trouble of answering Newnham's request for a letter about me, as I shall withdraw my application there as soon as this matter is settled.

Second, about your proposal to Professor Moore that I write another article for *Mind*, satisfactory to you. He gathered that this was to be done by my coming to you for discussion of problems in foundations, in the hopes of my writing something which would set right the faults of the [l]ast one and which would represent your views insofar as I used them. I consider the success of this proposal very doubtful, and give here my reasons for thinking so.

First, it is doubtful whether what I write at the end of further discussion with you will be satisfactory to you – unless you dictate the material. This latter I refuse to be partner to. If you want to write an article, that is your affair; but there is no point in giving a quotation from you with my name to it.

Second, if, as I think, the second attempt would be deemed practically as inadequate as the first, I should merely have shortened the very short time I now have in which to finish the thesis before I return to America the middle of August, and the thesis would most likely remain unfinished. It is essential that I make a try at completing this, for practical reasons. I've no assurance of security beyond next year, and because I shall have no time my first year of teaching to work on the thesis. Were I to come to you I could not plan on doing so for more than two weeks – or three weeks at the most. I am exceedingly tired, from having worked very hard with you this year, and know from experience that it would be impossible for me to write anything while I came to you, and that it would take at least two weeks after I quit coming to recover enough to be able to do anything.

Third, I think the situation of strain now existing between us makes it very unlikely that we can work together: I refuse absolutely to come and set myself up as a target for you to fire at me the opinions I already know. I resent bitterly your attempts at forcing on me the advise I refused to accept from you more than a week and a half ago. I will not have advise forced on me, and such tactics are useless. If I were to come to you I should come to learn, not to be converted. And I would not tolerate any allusion, open or otherwise, to your feeling that the publication of my article is

indecent. All has been said on that topic that need to be said and I refuse to hear it repeated. I do not agree in your feeling, nor am I willing to submit to further attempts to force on me a feeling I don't have.

If I could come to learn from you about foundations of mathematics for two weeks or three, under the conditions I have stipulated, the result of my doing so might be worth while. Though as I have already indicated, I think the result is not likely to be successful, granted you were willing or able to desist from trying to convert me to your feeling. Under such circumstances, if the real aim of my coming to you is to learn, it seems to me more sensible to study your manuscript which I now have and as I am now doing.

This is to be taken as a real consideration of the proposal you have made and of the conditions under which it might be *tried*. I think you will agree that it does not look as though it is worth the trying.

Sincerely yours,
Alice Ambrose

[Hand-written note by Wittgenstein:]
Don't destroy this letter, it might interest you one day to reread it.

The disagreement between Miss Ambrose and Wittgenstein was over an article "Finitism in Mathematics", which she published in two instalments in *Mind*, of which Moore was at the time editor. These appeared in vol. 44 (1935), 186–203 and 317–40. The former (April) number Wittgenstein borrowed from Trinity College Library on 1 May (his second and last entry in the Library register). That instalment contains, as well as some particular acknowledgements, the general statement: "The view presented is guided throughout by certain suggestions made by Dr. Ludwig Wittgenstein in lectures delivered in Cambridge between 1932 and 1935."

In the second instalment (whose very publication was in question in these letters but which did in fact appear) this is explicitly modified, in a particular context, as follows:

> This is a view which I understood Dr. Ludwig Wittgenstein to put forward in his lectures and which but for them would never have occurred to me. It is only in this sense that any view which I have put forward can be said to have been guided by suggestions made by him. [She proceeds to further protestations in the same vein.]

However there was bound to be disagreement also over whether Miss Ambrose's thesis for the PhD, of which the two articles objected to formed part, was ready for submission. Hence perhaps Wittgenstein's resignation as examiner (see **187**). In the event she was awarded her degree *in absentia* in April 1938, a procedure for which Wittgenstein had pleaded in **181** above. The substitute examiner (R. B. Braithwaite), in his report judged that the thesis was better where it did *not* betray the influence of Wittgenstein.

This contretemps caused some stir at Cambridge and also, by interrupting the dictation of the Brown Book, perhaps contributed to changing the pattern of Wittgenstein's own work. On the whole matter see Professor Ambrose's own account in Alice Ambrose and Morris Lazerowitz (eds), *Ludwig Wittgenstein: Philosophy and Language* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1972), pp. 22–4.

Frances – possibly a miswriting for Francis [Skinner]: otherwise unknown.

187. To G. E. Moore, 16.5.1935

Trinity College
Cambridge
16th May 1935

Dear Moore,

This is only to confirm the statement I made in our conversation last Tuesday that I am resigning as Miss Ambrose's examiner for her Ph.D. degree.

Yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

examiner for her Ph.D. degree – The Faculty Board had already, on 7 May, provided for Wittgenstein's replacement (should he in the event decline to serve) by Braithwaite.

188. To G. E. Moore, 18.5.[1935]

18 May

Dear Moore,

I am returning Miss Ambrose's M.S. – After her conversation with you on Thursday she wrote me a letter in which she gave me cheek. – I didn't answer it, only sent it back to her with the remark: "Don't destroy this letter, it may interest you some day to reread it". – I think you have no idea in what a serious situation she is. I don't mean serious, because of the difficulty to find a job; but serious because she is now actually standing at a crossroad. One road leading to perpetual misjudging of her intellectual powers and thereby to hurt pride and vanity etc. etc. The other would lead her to a knowledge of her own capacities and that *always* has good consequences. – You are the only person who now has any influence on her and I wish you'ld use it for a good end! – I have given up the idea to talk to Newman. I think the right thing for me is not to have my hand in this matter any more. Whether I shall write to "Mind" or not I don't yet know.

Yours ever

Ludwig Wittgenstein

she wrote me a letter – **186** above. Miss Ambrose herself described it to Mrs Moore in a letter of 8 February 1936, "I defended myself . . . I told him what I thought of his own conceit. I'm tired of his going about laying down the moral law . . . And yet there is a very great deal in him to love."

Newman – The mathematician M. H. A. Newman (1897–1984), who had been appointed co-examiner of Miss Ambrose.

whether I shall write to "Mind" or no – Wittgenstein evidently did not write. He may have been satisfied by Miss Ambrose's disclaimer in her second article (see note to **186**). In a letter to Schlick of 31 July 1935 (after the appearance of the second article) he says that he is too busy to do so and that the matter has now become one of indifference (*gleichgültig*) for him, though it was not so originally.

189. From the Minutes of the Moral Science Club, 31.5.1935

Mr Wisdom read "A note on Moore and Wittgenstein":

People might say that Wittgenstein in his lectures spends an unconscionable time saying nothing definite, that Broad deals out dope, and that Moore pursues a will o' the wisp, but he (Mr. Wisdom) has observed that each produces a change in those who go to their lectures, which, though it is different in each case, is in each case a change of a kind philosophers have sought.

190. To J. M. Keynes, 30.6.[1935]

Sunday 30.6.

My dear Keynes,

I'm sorry I must trouble you with my affairs again. There are two things I want to ask you:

a) I thought the other day when we talked in your room you were not disinclined to give me some sort of introduction to Maiski the Embassador. I then said I thought he would not be the man who would give me the advice I wanted. But I've been told since that *if* he were inclined to give me a letter of introduction to some officials in Russia it would help me a lot. Therefore my first question is, would you be willing to give me an introduction to Maiski so as to make it possible for me to have a conversation with him, as the result of which he *might* give me an introduction?

b) I have now more or less decided to go to Russia as a Tourist in September and see whether it is possible for me to get a suitable job there. If I find (which, I'm afraid is quite likely) that I can't find such a job, or get permission to work in Russia, then I should want to return to England and if possible study Medicine. Now when you told me that you would finance me during my medical training you did not know, I think, that I wanted to go to Russia and that I would try to get permission to practice medicine in Russia. I know that you are not in favour of my going there (and I think I understand you). Therefore I must ask you whether, under these circumstances, you would still be prepared to help me. I don't like to ask you this question, not because I risk a 'No', but because I hate asking any questions about this matter. If you reply please just write on a P.C.:

a) No or a) Yes etc

b) No etc

as the case may be.

I shall not think it in the least unkind of you if you answer both a and b negatively.

I left your room the other day with a sad feeling. It is only too natural that you shouldn't entirely understand what makes me do what I am doing, nor how hard it is for me.

Yours ever

Ludwig

trouble you with my affairs again – This perhaps refers to the fact that Wittgenstein in the spring of 1935 had been discussing with Keynes his plans of publishing the book on which he was then working. Keynes mentions this in a letter to Moore of 6 March 1935. Keynes expressed his willingness to contribute to the printing costs, should the publication plans meet with financial difficulties. Wittgenstein seems to have wanted his work published under the auspices of the British Academy.

Maiski – Ivan Mikhailovitch Maisky (1884–1975), Ambassador of the USSR to Great Britain 1932–43.

191. To J. M. Keynes, 6.7.1935

Saturday 6.7.35.

My dear Keynes,

Thanks for your letter. To thank you for your answer to point a) wouldn't be the right thing, for no word of thanks would be really adequate. – As to b) I can't see Vinogradoff because he has left for Moskow. He told me he was going to leave on the Saturday after my conversation with him. In this conversation he wasn't at all very helpful i.e. not as helpful even as he might have been. I'm sure however he didn't show this when you asked him about me in the presence of Maisky. Vinogradoff was *exceedingly careful* in our conversation and I'm sure he has to be. He of course knew as well as anyone that recomendations might help me but it was quite clear that he wasn't going to help me to get any, at least none that might carry real weight. – Now what I wanted with Maisky was this: I wanted to see him and have a conversation with him. I know that there is very little chance that I or my case could make a good impression on him. But I think there is an off chance of this happening. There is further a small chance of his knowing some official at Leningrad or Moskow to whom he might introduce me. I want to speak to officials at two institutions; one is the "Institute of the north" in Leningrad, the other the "Institute of national Minorities" in Moskow. These Institutes, as I am told, deal with people who want to go to the 'colonies' the newly colonized parts at the periphery of the U.S.S.R. I want to get information and possibly help from people in these Institutes. I thought that Maisky might recommend me to someone there. I *imagine* that such a recommendation or introduction could be of two kinds. It may either be purely official; in which case it could only say "would so and so be so kind to *see* me and listen to my questions". For it is clear to me that Maisky could not do anything else qua Embassador. Or it might be an inofficial recommendation to someone he knows well and this he would only give me if I made a good impression on him, which – I *know* – is very unlikely. If what I think is sound – and God knows whether it is – then it might be useful for me to get an introduction from you to Maisky. In this introduction I don't want you to *ask* him to give me introductions, but only to allow me to have a conversation with him in order to get some information or advice. If he grants me an interview I will myself ask him whether he could give me an introduction to someone in Russia. You would have to say in your introduction that I am your personal friend and that you are sure that I am in no way politically dangerous (that is, if this is your opinion). – If you feel, either that such an introduction and consequent conversation could do me no good or if you feel uncomfortable about giving me such an introduction for any other reasons, whatever they may be, I will feel PERFECTLY satisfied with your not giving me an introduction.

I am sure that you partly understand my reasons for wanting to go to Russia and I admit that they are partly bad and even childish reasons but it is true also that behind all that there are deep and even good reasons.

Yours ever
Ludwig

your answer to point a) – Keynes had evidently said that he would stand by his promise to finance Wittgenstein's medical training, even when he knew that Wittgenstein meant to try to get permission to practise medicine in Russia. This was in fact part of question b) in Wittgenstein's previous letter (**190**).

Vinogradoff – Serge Vinogradoff, Press Attaché at the Russian Embassy, was perhaps temporarily absent: he spoke in Cambridge in January 1936.

192. From J. M. Keynes, 10.7.1935

Dr Wittgenstein,
Trinity College,
Cambridge.

July 10th, 1935

Dear Ludwig,

I enclose a letter of introduction to Maisky. I suggest that you might send this to him with a covering note asking if he could manage to spare the time to give you an interview.

I gathered from Vinogradoff that the difficulty would be that you would have to receive an invitation from some Soviet organisation. If you were a qualified technician of any description of a sort likely to be useful to them, that might not be difficult. But, without some such qualification, which might very well be a medical qualification, it would be difficult.

Yours ever,
JMK

Monsieur Maisky,
13 Kensington Palace Gardens,
W.8.

July 10th, 1935

Dear Monsieur Maisky,

May I venture to introduce to you Dr Ludwig Wittgenstein, a Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, who is anxious to find a means of obtaining permission to live more or less permanently in Russia.

Dr Wittgenstein, who is a distinguished philosopher, is a very old and intimate friend of mine, and I should be extremely grateful for anything you could do for him. I must leave it to him to tell you his reasons for wanting to go to Russia. He is not a member of the Communist Party, but has strong sympathies with the way of life which he believes the new régime in Russia stands for.

I may mention that Dr Wittgenstein is an Austrian subject, though he has had long periods of residence in Cambridge both before and since the war. He has already had an interview with Mr Vinogradoff, who gave him some preliminary advice, but I gather that Mr Vinogradoff is no longer in England.

Yours sincerely,

193. To J. M. Keynes, [after 10.7.1935]

Friday

Dear Keynes,

This is only to thank you for your introduction and to tell you that my interview with Maisky went off all right. He was definitely nice and in the end promised to send me some addresses of people in Russia of whom I might get useful information. He did not seem to think that it was utterly hopeless for me to try to get permission to settle in Russia though he too didn't think it was likely.

Yours ever
Ludwig

Wittgenstein visited Russia early in September 1935. After his return to Cambridge from his year in Norway, 1936–7, he still had plans to go to Russia. See Paul Engelmann, *Letters from Ludwig Wittgenstein*, p. 58.

194. To P. Sraffa, [13.7.1935]

Wednesday

Dear Sraffa,

I meant to ask you what was the name of the preparation against bugs which you once mentioned to me. I think you said that you had the stuff with you in Russia. Also please let me know where one can get it, if you happen to know. –

I said to you today that I would write to you sometime, but in fact I think that it wouldn't be quite natural for me to write to you; unless one day I see clearly that you were right in the essential points of our conversations, or, if I should ever see clearly that you were wrong. All I can now say is this: that there is *something* fundamentally wrong with me. – if a layman with healthy eyes looks at a bad portrait he sees that it is bad and will often tell you straightaway *what* is wrong in it, in his opinion; he will insist, say, that the nose is too long. The painter can then safely take it from him that the portrait is bad; but he would as a rule be ill advised to shorten the nose. For it is one thing to see that a picture is bad, and an entirely different thing to see where the fault lies. – Thus, when you look into me you see that here is something wrong – and I agree – but whether in showing what is wrong you point to the right spot is very doubtful, – and perhaps not really relevant, as it is *my* job anyway to do something to put it right. Let us hope that this shall really be done and that one day I shall feel allright.

Yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

Pencilled dating by Sraffa, almost erased. This was shortly before Wittgenstein's trip to Russia, which was itself a reflection of his discontent with his life and work.

preparation against bugs – Wittgenstein had a modern aversion to these and would ask his friend, Hänsel, to find him a room that was not *verwanzt* ("bug-infested"). Russell, a Victorian, mocked him for minding them when the two met in Innsbruck in 1922.

195. To P. Sraffa, [19.7.]1935

Dear Sraffa,

I should like to change the day of our meeting to *Saturday*. – I believe I have found the solution of the problem we talked about. It is this: that *nothing that I say really interests you*. This can only be seen to be the solution, if you think a good deal about it. You like to discuss with me because I am persistent and clever (in a sense), but the other thing which is necessary to make a *good* discussion that each should *enjoy* what the other says is lacking (i.e. *you* don't enjoy what *I* say, not vice versa.)

The enjoyment is in a sense the oil which lubricates discussion and to me perhaps it is the really valuable thing in a discussion. It may at first sound extraordinary that this lack should make such an enormous difference but think what happens to a mashine if it isn't oiled. If all this conveys nothing to you, don't be surprised it is again *me* who is talking to *you*.

Yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

The year is Sraffa's dating. Pocket diaries of both men show a Saturday meeting after regular Friday meetings on the date suggested.

196. To G. E. Moore, 18.9.1935

18 September 1935

Dear Moore,

I shall come back to Cambridge in about two weeks. I will try to get something ready for publication. Whether successfully, God knows. I intend to stop in Cambridge for the whole academic year and to lecture. If you think it wise, please have my lectures announced.

Yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

Postcard from Moscow with a view of the Kremlin.

I intend to stop in Cambridge for the whole academic year and to lecture – Perhaps a change of mind: Wittgenstein no longer thought of taking up a new life in Russia: he had little immediate prospect of employment there and he could not take his friend Skinner (now ill) with him, still less leave him behind, ill and alone. Wittgenstein specifies "the whole academic year" because his Fellowship was due to expire in December (though it was in the event prolonged to 30 September 1936, as was his Faculty Assistant Lecturership).

197. To B. Russell, [Autumn 1935]

Trinity Coll.
Wednesday

Dear Russell,

Two years ago, or so, I promised you to send you a M.S. of mine. Now the one I'm sending you today isn't *that* M.S. I'm still pottering about with it and God knows whether I will ever publish it, or any of it. But two years ago I held some lectures in Cambridge and dictated some notes to my pupils so that they might have something to carry home with them, in their hands if not in their brains. And I had these notes duplicated. I have just now been correcting misprints and other mistakes in some of the copies and the idea came into my mind whether you might not like to have a copy. So I'm sending you one. I don't wish to suggest that you should read the lectures; but *if* you should have nothing better to do and *if* you should get some mild enjoyment out of them I would be very pleased indeed. (I think it is very difficult to understand them, as so many points are just hinted at. They were meant only for the people who heard the lectures.) As I say, if you don't read them *it doesn't matter at all.*

Yours ever

Ludwig Wittgenstein

M.S. – The "M.S." that Wittgenstein sent to Russell must have been the Blue Book dictated to a sub-group of his class in the academic year 1933–4 (see **166**, **176**, and **182** above). The other piece of writing to which Wittgenstein refers is presumably "The Big Typescript", which Wittgenstein compiled in the course of 1932–3 and which was a successor to (and incorporates much of) the *Philosophische Bemerkungen* of 1930. An account of this typescript was given in the Editor's Note in *Philosophische Grammatik* (Oxford: Blackwell 1969) and it has been much discussed since: see for example, A. J. P. Kenny, *The Legacy of Wittgenstein* (Oxford and New York: Blackwell, 1984), pp. 24–37, and S. Hilmy, *The Later Wittgenstein* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1987), ch. 1. It has now been published as *The Big Typescript: TS 213*, ed. C. Grant Luckhardt and M. Aue (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005). Since it is a typescript of 768 pages, it may be that Wittgenstein had thought of sending Russell just the mathematical section described in the notes to **183**.

198. To W. H. Watson, 19.10.1935

Trinity College
Cambridge
19.10.35

My dear Watson,

It is ages since you heard from me last. I'm sending you the lecture notes which were taken from the lectures I gave two years ago (i.e. in the academic year 33–34). Don't read them please unless you've really nothing better to do! *Should* you read them and get a little pleasure out of them I'd be very glad. I have not yet published anything and don't know if I ever will but my intention is now to have something publish*able* ready by the end of this academic year. After that I want to leave Cambridge and Philosophy and I have some mad plans. One is to study medicine, if I still have the brains to study anything. I long for a job which brings me in closer contact with human beings.

Drury, whom I think you know, is in Dublin studying medicine. He is getting on very well indeed. I'm only afraid that he works too much and eats too little.

I'm fairly healthy though growing more and more stupid steadily. There is no drug to stop that. Prof. Moore is well too and hasn't changed a bit (as far as I can notice.)

I hope you'll let me hear from you before long.

Best wishes! Yours ever

Ludwig Wittgenstein

I hope your family is well!

lecture notes – This letter accompanied a copy of the Blue Book (see **166–7**) with Wittgenstein's corrections. The copy is preserved at Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario.

199. To B. Russell, [before 28.11.1935]

Trin. Coll.
Sunday

Dear Russell,

I'm in a slight difficulty: I gather that you're coming up to read a paper to the Moral Sc. Club on the 28th. Now it would be the natural thing for me to attend the meeting and take part in the discussion. – But: – a) I gave up coming to the Mor. Sc. Cl. 4 years ago; people then more or less objected to me for talking too much in their discussions. b) At the meeting there will be Broad, who, I believe, objects most strongly to me. On the other hand (c), if I am to discuss at all it will – in all likelyhood – be the only natural thing for me to say *a good deal*, i.e., to speak for a considerable time. d) Even if I speak a good deal I shall probably find that it's hopeless to explain things in such a meeting.

There are therefore the following possibilities: a) I don't come to the meeting at all – This is obviously right, unless you *definitely* want me to come.

b) I could come but take no part in the discussion. This too is all right with me, if it is what you want me to do. c) I come and speak up whenever you want me to, i.e., whenever you say so.

You may not quite understand my point of view. It is, roughly, this: If I felt that I had to make a stand against something and that I could do it with any chance of success I would do it, Broad or no Broad. But as it is, I feel like someone who's intruding on a teaparty in which some people don't care to have him. If, on the other hand, *you* wished me to be there and to speak (in my natural way, of course) then it would be as if the host wanted me to be at the teaparty, and in this case I wouldn't care whether any of the guests objected. – If I don't come to the Mor. Sc. Club some of the members and I could still have a discussion with you the next day in my room, or just you and I.

I should be glad if you'ld write to me a line about this. (Provided that you don't think what I wrote some sort of polite nonsense or fishing for compliments; etc.) We also could decide what is the right thing to do just before the meeting, if I could see you for a minute then.

I am pleased that you're reading my M.S. But please don't think, it's in any way necessary. You need neither write nor speak a review about it. I know that it isn't as good as it ought to be and, on the other hand, that it might be still worse.

Yours ever
Ludwig Wittgenstein

paper to the Moral Sc. Club – The Minute Book dates this talk 29 November 1935 and does not record any intervention by Wittgenstein. The paper was "The Limits of Empiricism" which Russell subsequently, on 5 April 1936, read to the Aristotelian Society and which is published in the Society's *Proceedings*.

my M.S. – The Blue Book (see note to **197**).

1936

200. To P. Sraffa, [before 30.9.1936]

Dear Sraffa,

I thought you might not mind hearing from me so I write to you. I am glad I have come here. Life here does me good though it's not easy (or rather for that reason). I live alone in a little house outside the village. You can't see it on this p.c. I have to do all the house work myself and it takes a good deal of time. But that's good too. My work goes fairly well. – When I came here I was ill and couldn't recover for some time, but now I'm perfectly well. I think of you quite often and not with disagreable feelings. I also sometimes think of our last conversation in the Backs about Spain and how wrong I was. My address is: Skjolden i Sogn, in case you care to let me hear from you. I hope you are well and that your work goes well. Give my love to Keynes and also to Watson. Tell the latter not to be too damn lazy and to let me hear from him.

Yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

My house lies on the lake which begins here, for THIS is the fjord

In August 1936 Wittgenstein, his Cambridge posts having come to an end, went to live in his hut in Norway. He first worked on a German version of the Brown Book which he had dictated to Alice Ambrose and Francis Skinner in 1934–5; Wittgenstein's German version of part of this (with an independent translation of the rest of the book) has been published as "Eine philosophische Betrachtung", in *Schriften*, vol. 5 (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1970). Wittgenstein himself soon abandoned this project, however, and made a fresh start which resulted in a first version of the *Philosophical Investigations*. Wittgenstein's stay in Norway lasted until December 1937, interrupted only by visits to Vienna and then England, one around Christmas and New Year 1937 (six weeks), one in summer 1937 (three months). See **204**.

An arrow from the word "here" points to the edge of the postcard picture, while "this" doubly underlined, indicates the body of water actually on the card.

Dated by reference to arrival in Skjolden on 27 August 1936.

Watson – Here Alister Watson (see **229** below), not W. H. Watson, is meant.

201. From G. E. Moore, 30.9.1936

86 Chesterton Road,
Cambridge.
Sept. 30/36

Dear Wittgenstein,

I was glad to hear from you, and glad that your work has been going pretty well. I hope it will turn out to have been the right thing for you to go there. I remember your taking me to the site where you said you intended to build a house: I remember the sort of place it was very well. But I don't think I knew that you had actually built a house there; and perhaps you didn't, but on some other site. If I remember right, the site you took me to would be not far outside the post-card, on the right hand side, a good way up above the fiord.

My work has not been going at all well: I have not got anything finally written. I have been trying to think hard, but I find things very puzzling: there are so many different points, which I cannot fit together. I have been reading through again all of your work that I have, in the hope of getting clearer.

In other respects all has been going well with us. I met Wisdom today, for the first time since you left: he has not been back long. He was feeding his mare on Empty Common. I told him I had heard from you, and that you said you would write to him soon. We had a bit of a walk and talk together, and I was very glad to see him.

I have just heard from Rhees that he has got a job in Deighton Bell's book-shop. He found he could not get anything written for the Trinity Fellowship; so he is not competing. He was very distressed about it.

Yours

G. E. Moore

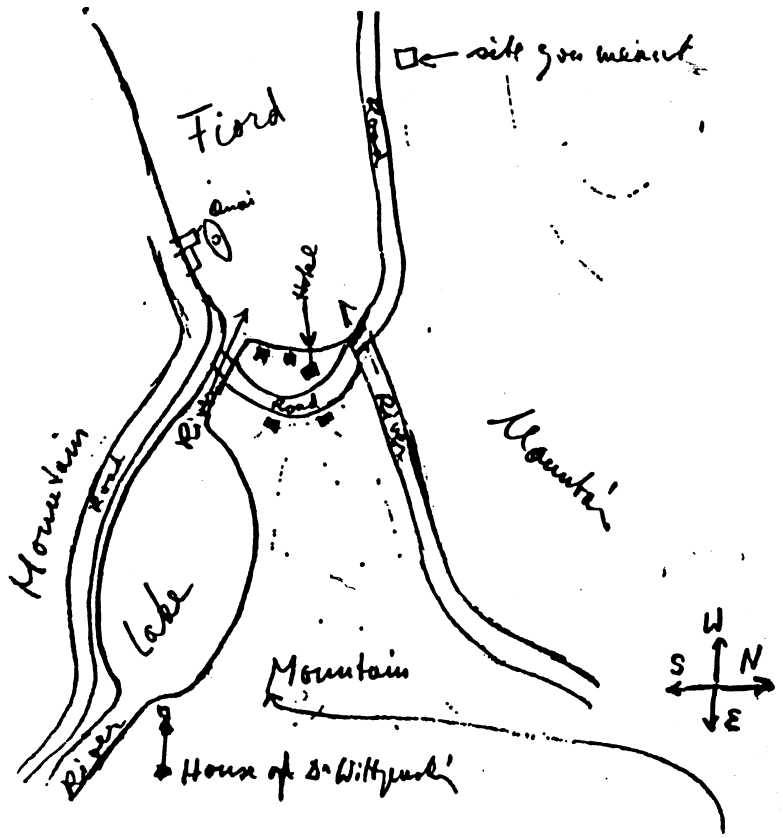
Rhees – Rush Rhees (1905–89), a pupil of Wittgenstein's and later the executor of his will.

202. To G. E. Moore, [October 1936]

Wednesday

Dear Moore,

I was very glad to get your letter. My house is not built on the site you mean. This map will show you where it is and why I can't get into the village without rowing; for the Mountain is much too steep for anyone to walk on it along the lake. I do believe that it was the right thing for me to come here thank God. I can't imagine that I could have worked anywhere as I do here. It's the quiet and, perhaps, the *wonderful* scenery; I mean, its quiet seriousness.



I am sorry to hear that your work hasn't been going well, or satisfactorily. I'm sure somehow that you're doing good work, and at the same time I think I can understand, why you don't get "anything finally written". That, I think, shows that what you're doing is right. I don't mean that it would be wrong however if you got anything finally written and in fact I hope you *will*. Rhees' case is, of course, quite different, but here too I can't help feeling that it's not bad, *in fact that it's good that he found himself unable to write anything*. Please, if you see him, remember me to him and tell him that I was glad to hear that he could not get anything written. That's a *good* sign. One can't drink wine while it ferments, but that it's fermenting shows that

it isn't dish-water. You see, I still make beautifull similes. – Tell Rhees that I'm not glad because I'm malicious.

We have had the most wonderfull weather for the last 4 weeks, though it's already getting cold. The waterfalls are entirely frozen and it's about –3°C at nights. But I don't suffer from the cold as I would in England, for it's dry.

Remember me to Mrs Moore and to Hardy and Littlewood if you should see them.

Yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

Dated by Moore.

Rhees – See **201** above.

203. To G. E. Moore, [November 1936]

Wednesday

Dear Moore,

Enclosed please find the photos. I don't know whether they're any d . . . good, but anyhow they're easily as good as I am. One – in the Botanical garden – was taken in Dublin by Drury, the other two by Pattisson in France. The one on which I look like an old prophet was taken when I was rather ill. The one with the bridge in the background was taken while I was taking a photo myself. If you don't like them throw them away and I'll send you better ones when there will be some. I enclose a p.c. which shows exactly where my hutt stands though it doesn't show the hutt, which was built after the picture was taken. The scaffolding you see in the foreground does no longer exist and, I think, only bits of it existed when you saw it before the war.

Yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

Pattisson – Gilbert Pattisson also became a close friend of Wittgenstein's in 1929 while an undergraduate at Cambridge and Wittgenstein always arranged to meet him on his way through London in the 1930s. The two men spent a short holiday in France in July 1936.

204. To G. E. Moore, 20.11.[1936]

Thursday
20. Nov.

Dear Moore,

I was glad to get your letter. My work isn't going badly. I don't know if I wrote to you that when I came here I began to translate into and rewrite in German the stuff I had dictated to Skinner and Miss Ambrose. When about a fortnight ago, I read through what I had done so far I found it all, or nearly all, boring and artificial. For having the english version before me had cramped my thinking. I therefore decided to start all over again and not to let my thoughts be guided by anything but themselves. – I found it difficult the first day or two but then it became easy. And so I'm writing now a new version and I hope I'm not wrong in saying that it's somewhat better than the last. – Besides this all sorts of things have been happening inside me (I mean in my mind). I won't write about them now, but when I come to Cambridge, as I intend to do for a few days about New Year, I hope to God I shall be able to talk to you about them; and I shall then want your advice and your help in some very difficult and serious matters. –

I was very glad to hear that Skinner came to the Mor. Sc. Club and that he spoke. I wish it were possible for you to see him once in a while! It would do him masses of good. For he *needs* someone he can talk to decently and seriously!

If ever you see Ryle or write to him give him my love. I can quite imagine that he didn't read a good paper and also that he was nice and decent and agreeable in the discussion.

I intend to leave here for Vienna about Dec. 8th and to come to Cambridge about the 30th Dec. and to stay *about* a week.

Best wishes!
Ludwig Wittgenstein

stuff I had dictated – The Brown Book. Cf. notes to **183** above.

new version – This is a first version of the *Investigations* up to section 189. The manuscript was written in a big bound notebook Wittgenstein gave as a Christmas gift to his sister, Mrs Stonborough. She entrusted it, with other manuscripts, to Wittgenstein's friend Rudolf Koder (see notes to **99**), whose son published an account of the matter: see J. Koder, J., "Verzeichnis der Schriften Ludwig Wittgensteins im Nachlass Rudolph und Elisabeth Koder", *Mitteilungen aus dem Brenner-Archiv* 12 (1993), 52–4.

talk to you – See **206** and the following letters.

Ryle – Gilbert Ryle (1900–76) had known Wittgenstein since 1929. He was during these years Student of Christ Church and later became Waynflete Professor of Metaphysical Philosophy in the University of Oxford. He was principally responsible for introducing Linguistic Philosophy in that university. On this occasion, 30 October 1936, he had read to the Moral Science Club a paper entitled "Unverifiability by Me", subsequently published in *Analysis* 4 (1936–7), 1–11. Ryle was to succeed Moore as editor of *Mind*.

205. From N. Bachtin, 22.11.1936

34, Hilldown Road
Highfield
Southampton
22.11.36.

Dear Wittgenstein,

It is revolting that I have not written to you till now – I always ment to, but never succeeded. I am very glad you are well and work is going on – and very impatient too, to begin my attemp[t]s at translating it. I know, nothing can be really done until you are back, and we can work at it together, but I think it would be good if I had some of it beforehand to get familiar with the text and send you some samples of translation for correction and advice. So do send something.

We are now living in a [card-board] cottage with a brook and a bit of waste land behind. This is not unpleasant to begin with. Work is as boring and absorbing as ever but seems to go more automatically and so, to some extent, seems less heavy. No news from Skinner himself, but George Thomson who came here for a weekend says that he looks very cheerful (by the way I just heard from Birmingham that Thomson is appointed there, but this is not yet official – some confirmation by somebody must take place).

What are your projects for Christmas? Are you coming here? We intended to go for two or three weeks to Paris (from Dec. 18 to Jan. 1st), but if you are coming we will of course change over so as not to miss you. Write and send work!

Yours
N. Bachtin.

send something – The interest of this letter is the collaboration of which it gives evidence. There had been many meetings between the two in the Long Vacation of 1936 and it seems that a project was formed of Bachtin's translating the book then planned. Wittgenstein may have sent work to Bachtin from Norway and did indeed come to stay with the couple (omitted here is a friendly and welcoming note from Bachtin's wife Constance) after his January 1937 visit to Cambridge with its influenza and "confessions" (see below). He was in Southampton from 18 to 23 January 1937. On returning to Norway he wrote in his diary (7.2.1937), "Es fehlt meinem Schreiben wieder an Frömmigkeit und Ergebenheit. So sorge ich mich darum daß, was ich jetzt hervorbringe, Bachtin schlechter erscheinen könnte, als was ich ihm gegeben habe." ("Once again my writing is lacking in devoutness and humility. I am worried that what I am producing now could seem to Bachtin worse than what I have given him") (MS 183) – the point being that this was precisely the wrong thing to worry about.

It was to Bachtin that Wittgenstein (as mentioned in the Preface to *Philosophical Investigations*) explained the *Tractatus* in 1943 and became aware that his later thought could best be understood by contrast to and against that background. (The preface in some editions speaks of "four years ago" only as a result of an unexplained manuscript correction of "two years" in the original typescript, itself now lost, so that we cannot judge in whose hand.) Wittgenstein's diary shows a Christmas visit to Birmingham in 1942 and Thomson's letters speak of a visit in 1942–3, which was perhaps the same occasion. Thomson says that Wittgenstein always liked to have long talks with Bachtin and to speak Russian with him. In 1943 Wittgenstein suggested to Cambridge University Press the re-publication of the *Tractatus* alongside his new work. The original publishers would hardly have agreed to this. Whether Bachtin was then thought of as translator is not known. Rhees had translated part of the new work in 1938, perhaps because

something was urgently required to show to the electors to the Chair of Philosophy, but his translation was, with whatever justice, not much to Wittgenstein's taste (see **240–2** below).

Thomson is appointed – Thomson duly became Professor of Greek at Birmingham, see letter appended to 206. Bachtin joined him there as a Lecturer in Classics in 1938.

1937

206. From G. Thomson, 5.1.1937

5.1.37
Girton Gate.
Huntingdon Road.
Cambridge.

My dear Ludwig,

This is just to repeat what I said yesterday – that my affection for you is not in the least diminished, on the contrary, if anything, increased, by what you have told me. I have told Katharine all about it, and she feels as I do. If at any time in the future you feel tempted to revive bitter memories, which ought to have been banished, I hope you will remember us and our affection for you.

Yours ever
George
Katharine

This letter is evidently a reaction to one of Wittgenstein's "confessions". During his visit to Vienna and England around New Year 1937 he talked to several friends about personal matters and his inner struggles. Cf. Engelmann, *Letters from Ludwig Wittgenstein*, p. 58, and Fania Pascal in Rush Rhees (ed.), *Ludwig Wittgenstein: Personal Recollections*, pp. 26–62. In the present case we have Wittgenstein's reply, which Professor M. Alexiou found among the papers of her mother (d.2006) and kindly showed me. Since the present volume was already in press when I had sight of the letter, it is printed here in a departure from the chronological order and numbering normally observed. The conjectured date is that of the first Friday after Wittgenstein's arrival at his house in Norway.

To G. Thomson, [5.2 1937]

Skjolden i Sogn
Friday

Dear George,

I haven't yet thanked you and Mrs Thomson for your most kind letter. It did me good to get it.

When I saw you I said I would leave Cambridge in a few days. But I couldn't do so for I got 'flu and had to stay in bed for a few days. I left England on the 23rd Jan. still feeling a bit weak. And I think I haven't yet quite recovered, for my head feels stupid and dull and my work isn't going well at all. I dare say things will improve before long.

I hope you are finding Birmingham a tollerably agreeable place and the students not too dull.

Please remember me to your wife.

Best wishes and thanks again!

Ever yours
Ludwig

207. To G. E. Moore, [11.1.1937]

81 East Rd
Monday

Dear Moore,

I could not leave Cambridge last week as I wished. Instead I had to go to bed on Wednesday with a 'flue. I'm out of bed again but still *very* weak. Do you think you could come and have tea with me here tomorrow? – But on second thought I find that I shall be absolutely well enough to come to you. So I'll come to you at about 5 p.m., unless I hear from you to the contrary. I *very* much want to speak to you.

Yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

I'll come to you – To make a "confession" (see note to **206**).

208. To P. Sraffa, [14.1.1937]

Tuesday
81 East Rd

Dear Sraffa,

I'm writing this not knowing whether you're already up or not. I've been in bed with flue and am still too weak to go out. I VERY MUCH want to see you.

Could you come to me (above address) tomorrow afternoon at *4 o.c.*? I can only stay here for a few more days.

Yours.

Ludwig Wittgenstein

Dated by diary – meeting with Sraffa (actually at 11) and flu. See **209**. No doubt here too the meeting was for the purpose of a "confession".

209. To P. Sraffa, 16.1.1937

Saturday

Dear Sraffa,

This is only to say that I was very glad to have a talk with you yesterday, it did me good and I was pleased, and I hope that you too felt that it went well. Thanks!

Yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

I had a talk with Keynes in the afternoon. Partly through my fault it did not go so well as it might have gone.

Two further instances of "confessions" by Wittgenstein. Keynes describes this to Lydia as "an eccentric purpose" and says Wittgenstein did not look at all well.

Pencilled dating by Sraffa.

210. To A. Ambrose, 17.2.1937

Skjolden i Sogn
Norway
17.2.37.

Dear Miss Ambrose,

I am ashamed not to have sent you a card at Christmas. You were on my list of people to whome I intended to write but somehow you were forgotten. A few days ago your card arrived here and I was pleased to get it. So take my best wishes for the New Year although a bit of it has already passed. I've been living in Norway since last August, but I've been home and in England round about Christmas. I hope your work is going *well* and I hope you have forgiven me for inflicting pain upon you while you were in Cambridge.

Yours sincerely

Ludwig Wittgenstein

inflicting pain – See above, especially notes to **188**. The apology is of a piece with Wittgenstein's "confessions" around this time.

211. To P. Sraffa, 3.3.1937

Wednesday 3.3.
Skjolden i Sogn
Norway

Dear Sraffa,

I often think of you and should like to hear from you. Did you read Lichtenberg? I hope you did and enjoyed it.

My work hasn't been going well after I came back here, but I can't write about this now. It's going a little better at present.

If it were possible I should *very* much like you to see Skinner. He has no one to talk to sensibly and seriously and I can't help thinking it would do him a lot of good to see you, even if you didn't have a terrific conversation. I think just seeing you would do him good.

Give my love to Keynes and to Watson. I should like to hear from Watson.

Yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

Year pencilled in by Sraffa.

Lichtenberg – Often recommended to friends by Wittgenstein (see e.g. **20** above).

Watson – Again Alister Watson (see **229**) will have been meant.

212. To G. E. Moore, 4.3.[1937]

Skjolden i Sogn
Thursday 4.3.

Dear Moore,

This is only to say that I wish to hear from you. – My work hasn't been going well since I came back here. Partly because I've been troubled about myself a lot. In the last few days I've been able to work a bit better, but still only very moderately. The days are getting longer now and that cheers me up, but I still don't see the sun from where I live (Though in the village it shines for many hours.)

Give my love to Wisdom and tell him, please, to write to me occasionally. Have you heard from Rhees? I suppose you haven't seen Skinner, or I would have heard it from him. Though I wish you had! –

I enclose two stamps which might be of use to Mrs Moore. Please remember me to her. I hope to hear from you soon.

Lots of good wishes!

Yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

I've been troubled about myself a lot – Wittgenstein's self-searching in Norway was of course the background to the confessions mentioned above and continued after his return to Norway. MS 183 contains a kind of spiritual diary for this period as well as for earlier visits to Norway (1930–2). The manuscript was unknown until ten years ago but has now been published as Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Denkbewegungen, Tagebücher 1930–1932/1936–1937*, ed. Ilse Somavilla (Innsbruck: Haymon, 1997).

213. To W. H. Watson, 22.11.1937

Skjolden i Sogn
Norway
22.11.37

My dear Watson,

Yes, you're a damn bad correspondent – *but so am I*. I've been in Norway for the last 16 months with interruptions, living in a little house I had built for myself before the war. I came here to think and write and not to be disturbed. I don't know however if my book will appear during my lifetime. I have an idea it won't.

I'm pleased to hear you've published a book. But I needn't tell you I shan't read it. For a) I wouldn't understand it and b) I hardly read anything at all (practically *nothing*.) As to the preface and your mention of me, it's nice of you, you did it and I'm *sure* you did it in a kind way, so I needn't see that either. I haven't read Waissman's book and I'm not going to. I'm glad you found it clear and interesting – Braithwaite too has written a book, I hear. I'm sure it's damn bad, without having seen it. I intend to stay here for another 3 weeks and then to go to Vienna for Christmas and after Christmas to England. I haven't seen Prof. Moore since I saw him last in August, but I hear he's all right.

I dare say this'll reach you about Christmas, so the best I can do is to wish you a happy Christmas and New Year.

Do write to me again before *too* long. Trinity College will always find me. I *hope* I shall see you again some time.

Yours ever
Ludwig Wittgenstein

Contains photo inscribed "My house, or hut, is situated on this slope and behind this back, so you can't see it."

you've published a book – On Understanding Physics was published in 1938 but no doubt Watson already had copies.

Waissman's book – presumably Friedrich Waismann, *Einführung in das mathematische Denken* (Vienna: Springer, 1936).

Braithwaite too has written a book, I hear – Braithwaite's sole book publication before 1953 was *The State of Religious Belief* (London: Hogarth Press, 1927). Wittgenstein may be referring to some projected book that never appeared or was absorbed into Braithwaite's later publications (all post-war).

1938

214. To M. O'C. Drury, [February 1938]

Dear Drury,

I have thought a fair amount about our conversation on Sunday and I would like to say, or rather not to say but write, a few things about these conversations. Mainly I think this: Don't think about yourself, but think about others, e.g. your patients. You said in the Park yesterday that possibly you had made a mistake in having taken up medicine: you immediately added that probably it was wrong to think such a thing at all. I am sure it is. But not because being a doctor you may not go the wrong way, or go to the dogs, but because if you do, this has nothing to do with your choice of a profession being a mistake. For what human being can say what would have been the right thing if this is the wrong one? You didn't make a mistake because there was nothing at the time you knew or ought to have known that you overlooked. Only this one could have called making a mistake; and even if you had made a mistake in this sense, this would now have to be regarded as a datum as all the other circumstances inside and outside which you can't alter (control). The thing now is to live in the world in which you are, not to think or dream about the world you would like to be in. Look at people's sufferings, physical and mental, you have them close at hand, and this ought to be a good remedy for your troubles. Another way is to take a rest whenever you ought to take one and collect yourself. (Not with me because I wouldn't rest you.) As to religious thoughts I do not think the craving for placidity is religious; I think a religious person regards placidity or peace as a gift from heaven, not as something one ought to hunt after. Look at your patients more closely as human beings in trouble and enjoy more the opportunity you have to say 'good night' to so many people. This alone is a gift from heaven which many people would envy you. And this sort of thing ought to heal your frayed soul, I believe. It won't rest it; but when you are healthily tired you can just take a rest. I think in some sense you don't look at peoples's faces closely enough.

In conversations with me don't so much try to have the conversations which you think would taste well (though you will never get that anyway) but try to have the conversations which will have the pleasentest after-taste. It is most important that we should not one day have to tell ourselves that we had wasted the time we were allowed to spend together.

I wish you good thoughts but chiefly good feelings. [Drury's transcript ends here.]

Written in Dublin where Wittgenstein was visiting his friend and was himself thinking of a change of profession. The Park is Phoenix Park, where the two often did walk together. Wittgenstein stayed in Dublin from about 8 February to 16 March, when he returned to Cambridge to deal with the crisis in his affairs caused by the annexation of Austria. But it seems clear that he was in any case thinking of a major change of plans, probably including the abandonment of philosophy (see the following letters). The political situation may in fact have contributed to his remaining in academic life.

215. To G. E. Moore, 22.2.1938

22 February 1938

Dear Moore,

I should be very grateful if you would let me know the result of the Council meeting regarding my MSS. My address is

36 Chelmsford Rd.,
Ranelagh, Dublin

I wish you'ld see Skinner one of these days.

Ever yours
Ludwig Wittgenstein

Council meeting regarding my MSS – Wittgenstein at about this time planned to place his papers in Trinity College Library. As regards those still in Austria, he wrote to his sister requesting that they be sent in a locked chest:

> Meine M.S.S. werden nämlich bis auf weiteres für niemand, außer mir und noch einem, in der Bibliothek zugänglich sein. [The point is that in the library my manuscripts will, until further notice, be accessible to nobody but myself and one other person.]

This letter (the first page of which, with the date and the motivation of the instructions given, seems to be missing) is evidently addressed to his sister Hermine, and is now in the Brenner Archive at Innsbruck. Internal evidence (a birthday mentioned) suggests that it was written about the beginning of March, presumably in 1938. This dating is supported by a typescript list among Wittgenstein's papers which corresponds exactly with that made by his sister. It contains, however, manuscript notes possibly in Friedrich Waismann's hand, made perhaps in 1936.

The "one other person" mentioned may well have been Wittgenstein's friend Skinner.

At all events there must have been a prior request to Trinity College Library to house these or other manuscripts, for on 22 January 1938, T. Nicholas, the Senior Bursar, wrote to Moore saying that though the Council was "entirely willing" that Dr Wittgenstein's manuscripts should be deposited in the Library, it wished to know what the conditions about access and copyright were to be. "I am sorry", Nicholas concludes, "that he will not publish the work himself."

The Austrian papers described were in the end divided between the Austrian National Library and Trinity College Library, except for the manuscript draft of the *Tractatus* now in the Bodleian Library, Oxford.

216. To P. Sraffa, 12.3.1938

36 Chelmsford Rd.
Ranelagh
Dublin
12.3.38.

Dear Sraffa,

Thanks for your letter. – I'm afraid this one of mine is going to be long and rather confused corresponding to the confused state of my brain. You know, of course, more than I about the recent events in Austria. I take it, it is conceivable that they are the immediate preparation for a war and if a war should brake out now, God knows what would happen and I'm not talking about this possibility. Rather I assume that a war is not going to brake out within the next 6 months. Assuming this I want to know what I shall do. My plan originally was to go to Austria in May or June for one of my usual visits, to stay there a month or so and to return to Cambridge or Dublin. As things are now I wonder a) whether I shall be let out of Austria if I go there, b) whether I shall be let in to England from Austria. Now both to be able to leave Austria and to enter England are of VITAL importance to me. To have to live in Austria would be intollerable to me and I have friends in England I don't want to leave. Now I have still about 300–400 £ in England (I have no money in Austria) and they would allow me to live a year at least without taking a job and this on the whole is good for my work (i.e. my book). But I think now it may be important for me to try and get a job as a lecturer of sorts at Cambridge (I don't mean get a lectureship, as there's none vacant, but let them pay me for a course of lectures as they used to.) My object is this:

1) if I can say that I've got a job in England they can't so easily detain me in Austria.

2) if I have a job at Cambridge they, I mean the English immigration people, will let me come back to England.

3) If I'm not jobless, I shall more easily find a job elsewhere and perhaps acquire some other citizenship. For I am more anxious than ever of chucking my Austrian citizenship.

I needn't say that, being of jewish de[s]cent I *couldn't* get a job in Austria. (But even if I *had* a chance I'ld rather do anything than take it)

I am for the reasons mentioned inclined to go back to Cambridge next term (or during the vac) give some discussions as I always do and try to be taken on as *some* sort of lecturer. I'ld *rather* get a job over here in Ireland but I think there is no chance at present (but may be in future). By the way, when I said I may try to acquire an other citizenship I thought of the Irish one. I don't know whether I can explain my reason, but roughly it is this that here I couldn't be regarded as anything than a refugee pure and simple whereas in England with a Brittish passport I would be a kind of sham-englishman. I don't know if you see my point, and *possibly* I'm wrong anyway. – Now I should like to have your oppinion about my reasoning and whether it is advisable and right* to try for a job at Cambridge. I'm sorry to trouble you with this; but the fact was, I even thought of coming to England just to see you and hear

your oppinion. If you can, please write to me. I hope this letter still reaches you in Cambridge and I hope to see you anyhow at or after Easter. The sooner the better.

Yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

* or rather there is something fishy about it

12 March 1938 – German troops marched into Austria on this day and the *Anschluss* was declared on the 13th, but for some days some such developments had been predictable.

217. From P. Sraffa, 14.3.1938

King's College,
Cambridge.
14.3.38

Dear Wittgenstein,

Before trying to discuss, probably in a confused way, I want to give a clear answer to your question. If as you say it is of "vital importance" for you to be able to leave Austria and return to England, there is no doubt – you must not go to Vienna. Whether you are a lecturer at Cambridge or not, now you would not be let out: the frontier of Austria is closed to the exit of Austrians. No doubt these restrictions will have been somewhat relaxed in a month's time. But there will be no certainty for a long time that you will be allowed to go out, and I think a considerable chance of your not being allowed out for some time. You are aware no doubt that now you are a German citizen. Your Austrian passport will certainly be withdrawn as soon as you enter Austria: and then you will have to apply for a German passport, which may be granted if and when the Gestapo is satisfied that you deserve it.

As to the possibility of war, I do not know: it may happen any moment, or we may have one or two more years of "peace". I really have no idea. But I should not gamble on the likelihood of 6 months' peace.

If however you decided in spite of all to go back to Vienna, I think: a) it would certainly increase your chance of being allowed out of Austria if you were a lecturer in Cambridge; b) there would be no difficulty in your entering England, once you are let out of Austria (of Germany, I should say); c) before leaving Ireland or England you should have your passport changed with a German one, at a German Consulate: I suppose they will begin to do so in a very short time; and you are more likely to get the exchange effected here than in Vienna; and, if you go with a German passport, you are more likely (though not at all certain) to be let out again.

You must be careful, I think, about various things: 1) if you go to Austria, you must have made up your mind not to say that you are of Jewish descent, or they are sure to refuse you a passport; 2) you must not say that you have money in England, for when you are there they could compel you to hand it over to the Reichsbank; 3) if you are approached, in Dublin or Cambridge, by the German Consulate, for registration, or change or passport, be careful how you answer, for a rash word might prevent you ever going back to Vienna; 4) take great care how you write home, stick to purely personal affairs, for letters are certainly censored.

If you have made up your mind, you should apply at once for Irish citizenship – perhaps your period of residence in England will be counted for that purpose: do it before your Austrian passport is taken away from you, it is probably easier as an Austrian than as a German.

In the present circumstances I should not have qualms about British nationality if that is the only one which you can acquire without waiting for another ten years' residence: also you have friends in England who could help you to get it: and certainly a Cambridge job would enable you to get it quickly.

I shall be in Cambridge till Friday: afterwards letters will be forwarded to me to Italy, so take care what you say, that you may be writing for the Italian censor.

My telephone is 3675: you will find me available before noon and in the evening after 10.

Yours

Piero Sraffa

Excuse this confused letter.

This is the only letter of Sraffa's preserved among Wittgenstein's papers. Others here printed have been found elsewhere, chiefly in Sraffa's own papers.

this confused letter – Sraffa's standards were high. One letter from Keynes to him commences: "After three months commercial diplomacy with the Americans, I feel almost equal to correspondence with you."

218. To G. Pattison, 15.3.1938

Dear Gilbert,

I am sure you have been reminded of me several times in these last days reading the papers about Austria. As you can imagine I have been, and am, greatly troubled by the events. My relatives so far as I can judge are in no sort of danger as almost all of them are retiring and very respected people. My brother and sisters are, under the new laws, Jews, (not however their children, as they had no Jewish grandparents and baptized great-grandparents). Nevertheless, of course, the new regime [is|must be] *hateful* to them. I have not yet heard from home at all since the invasion, but there hasn't yet been time, and my people would always try to give me news in the *mildest possible* form so as not to worry me. I have written home saying that I would come any time if they needed me, but I almost assume that they have no need for me (not that they wouldn't like to see me). Now it is about myself that I really want to write. I am placed in a queer position. As you know I am automatically becoming a German Citizen, i.e. a German Jew. The very thought of becoming a German citizen is appalling to me, *even apart* from the degrading position etc., this latter I share with my relatives and could, *I think*, bring myself to bear. Though I don't know whether it [may|would] not continuously be preying on my mind. A still graver consequence however is this that on visiting Austria I shall, in all likelihood, not be let [out|back] to England again. You understand of course that it is out of the question for me to get any job there but even if it *were* possible I could hardly face [such a possibility|this idea]. You may call this weakness but such it is. My people are wealthyish and will probably even after all the changes have money enough to keep me. But I needn't say what that would mean for me. [So I am now|Therefore now I have been] seriously considering the idea of acquiring British citizenship. You know that I had just *thought* of this possibility before though never giving it any serious consideration for reasons which you and I have talked about. They roughly are, that I don't wish to become a sham-Englishman. The situation has however changed in my eyes now as I have to choose between a new [nationality|citizenship] which deprives me of *everything* and one which at least gives me the opportunity of working in a country in which I have lived most of my adult life have friends and have done my best work. I wish to God that there did not adhere to British [nationality|citizenship] the respectability etc. etc. which (though it does not repel me) is *not* what I seek. But this can't be helped. There is one enormously strong reason which would for me speak against acquiring a new nationality and it is this, that in all likelihood as a British citizen I shall be barred by the Germans from reentering Austria and therefore from seeing my family, except by meeting them, say, in Switzerland. But I don't see at present that this would be worse for me or them than my rotting alive in Austria or being haunted by a false position and anxiety in England. [I am therefore|For these reasons I am] [considering trying to acquire British citizenship *seriously*|seriously considering trying to acquire British citizenship]. It may of course be that before even this comes about I shall be summoned home by a letter from my people (in which case I [would|shall] go) but I have no reason to believe this; they would never dream of calling me unless in the *greatest* emergency.

As you can imagine many Cabinet meetings have been held in my mind about these matters, but I also wish to talk them over with you – level-headedly. I should like therefore to come to England in 12 days time i.e. on the . . . if you can possibly save the weekend for me. You might, just to make discussion easier, make *some* enquiries about the proceedings of nationalisation – unless, that is, you are in my case *dead against it*. Please let me know *as soon as possible* if, where and when you can meet me. Forgive me for making you read this long letter please don't throw it away and read it [again|once more] if you can. Whatever you may think about my problem I am

always yours

bloodily

L.

In case I should acquire British citizenship I have thought of living not in England but, say, in Ireland where I am more obviously a refugee. That is if I can get work there. (I know I need not tell you that what I want is not *just shelter*, but the possibility to work for others.)

Draft for a letter found in Wittgenstein's MS 158 at fols 29ff. Date from a diary entry of this date which records writing "a long letter to Gilbert about naturalization". Pattisson, an accountant by profession, was frequently his guide in practical matters, as well as a kind of administrator of his finances.

on the . . . – In fact Wittgenstein went to Cambridge before 18 March (letter to Keynes) but may have met Pattisson in London on 27 March.

219. To J. M. Keynes, 18.3.1938

81 East Rd.
Cambridge
18.3.38

My dear Keynes,

I am so sorry to have to trouble you with my own affairs at a time when you yourself are not too well. I want however to describe to you my present situation and ask you whether you can by any chance, in some way not too difficult for you, give me some advice or help. You know that by the annexation of Austria by Germany I have become a German citizen and, by the German laws, a German Jew (as three of my grandparents were baptised only as adults). The same, of course, applies to my brother and sisters (not to their children, *they* count as Aryans). As my people in Vienna are almost all retiring and very respected people who have always felt and behaved patriotically it is, on the whole, unlikely that they are at present in any *danger*. I have not yet heard from them since the invasion and there hasn't yet been time as they would wait in any case with giving me news until things had settled down a bit. I wrote to them a week ago saying that if they needed me I would come home any time. But I *believe* that they aren't going to call me and also that I couldn't at present do anything for them, except possibly cheering them up a little. – If however I went to Vienna now the consequences would be.

a) that my passport, being an Austrian one, would be taken away from me and b) that, in all likelihood, *no* passport would be given to me; as passports, except in very special cases, are not, I gather, issued to German Jews. I could therefore c) not leave Austria again and d) never again get a job.

My people, who were rich before the war, are still wealthyish and will probably, even when a lot will be taken away from them, still have enough money to keep me (and they would *gladly* do so) but I needn't say this would be the last thing that I'ld wish to happen.

I also must say that the idea of becoming (or being) a German citizen, even apart from all the nasty consequences, is APPALLING to me. (This may be foolish, but it just is so.)

For all these reasons I have now decided to try 1) to get a University job at Cambridge, 2) to acquire British citizenship.

The thought of acquiring British citizenship had *occurred* to me before; but I have always rejected it on the ground: that I do not wish to become a sham-Englishman (I think you will understand what I mean). The situation has however entirely changed for me now. For now I have to choose between two new nationalities, one of which deprives me of *everything*, while the other, at least, would allow me to work in a country in which I have spent on and off the greater part of my adult life, have made my greatest friends and have done my best work.

Now if I wish to try to become naturalised here I'm afraid I have to make haste; one of the reasons being that (as Sraffa pointed out to me) it would be easier as long as I hold an Austrian passport. And this I might have to give up before so very long.

As to getting a job at Cambridge you may remember that I was an assistant faculty lecturer for 5 years, and that the regulations don't allow one to hold this job for more than 5 years. When my 5 years had expired the faculty allowed me to go on lecturing as before and they went on paying me as before. Now it is for *this* that I shall apply, for there is no other job vacant. I had, in fact, thought of doing so anyway; though not now, but perhaps next autumn. But it would be important now for me to get a job *as quickly as possible*; for a) it would help me in becoming naturalised and b) if I failed in this and *had* to become a German I would have more chance to be allowed out of Austria again on visiting my people if I had a JOB in England.

I have talked all this over with Sraffa yesterday. He is leaving today or tomorrow for Italy and I came here in a hurry from Dublin to see him and talk with him. He thought the right thing for me is to see a solicitor about becoming naturalized, one who is an expert in this kind of thing. Sraffa thought that you might possibly be able to tell me the right person or give me some sort of advice about the matter, or also about applying for a University job.

I want to add that I'm in no sort of financial difficulties. I shall have about 300 or 400 £ and can therefore easily hold out for another year or so.

Well, this is all. Forgive me for making you read this *long* letter; if indeed you ever get to this line.

I hope I may see you again before so *very* long. *Whatever* you may think about me or my problems I am

Yours ever
Ludwig

P.S. If my people wrote to me now that they wanted me at home I would, of course have to go. But, as I said, this is most unlikely.

not too well – Keynes had been seriously ill with heart trouble since 1937.

baptised only as adults – And hence undeniably Jewish (though in the event one of the three was classified as Aryan).

a solicitor – To judge from Wittgenstein's pocket diary Keynes seems to have suggested F. A. S. Gwatkin of McKenna and Co., with whom Wittgenstein had appointments on 11 April and 30 June 1938. The desired certificate of naturalization was issued by the Home Office on 5 April of the following year and Wittgenstein took the Oath of Allegiance on 12 April 1939.

220. To P. Sraffa, 30.3.1938

81 East Rd.
Cambridge
30.3.38

Dear Sraffa,

The situation is roughly this:

I've had now a good many letters from home none of them containing any alarming news about my friends and relations there. So I think I needn't trouble you to go there and see them. One of my sisters who at present is in New York will return to Vienna in a week or a fortnights time and I have arranged to meet her on her way home in Southampton or Paris.

As to my naturalisation nothing definite has been done so far for reasons it would be very lengthy to explain in a letter. I have however no reason to think that I don't have a good chance. I have not yet been approached by the consulate.

I intend to stay here during the vac and expect to be invited to lecture next term.

Let me know when you come back.

Thanks for all the trouble you took over my business.

Best wishes!!

Yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

This letter was sent to Sraffa in Italy. It is of some interest that Sraffa, also for political reasons, was preparing to close the family house in Italy and bring his mother to England.

221. To P. Sraffa, 1.4.1938

81 East Rd
Cambridge
1.4.38

Dear Sraffa,

I wrote to you 2 days ago saying that I now needn't trouble you to go and see my people as the news I get from them sound all right. But if you're going to Vienna *anyhow* I'ld be grateful to you if you'ld look them up and told them all about me.

So long!

Yours
L.W.

go and see my people – Sraffa did in fact go in the course of his return from Italy as is shown by **222** below and by a letter from Hermine Wittgenstein to Ludwig Hänsel in I. Somavilla, A. Unterkircher, and C. P. Berger (eds), *Ludwig Hänsel–Ludwig Wittgenstein: Eine Freundschaft* (Innsbruck: Hayman, 1994), p. 148.

going to Vienna anyhow – Sraffa had no very obvious motive for going to Vienna, unless it was his liking to see for himself when important political events were happening; compare the visit to Czechoslovakia that Wittgenstein expects in **232** below.

222. To P. Sraffa, [20.4.]1938

Saturday
81 East Rd

Dear Sraffa,

This is only to tell you a) that I had a note from Keynes saying that his solicitor has advised him to write to some official at the Home Office about my case (which ought obviously to help me a lot); b) that I had a letter from my sister in Vienna saying how *very* glad they were to have met you and talked with you.

Yours
Ludwig Wittgenstein

Mark the golden rim of this card, it's the sort of thing I'm going in for now.

Dated 1938 by Sraffa: obviously received after his return from Italy (17 April 1938, as shown by a stamp in his passport).

my case – The application for naturalization.

223. To J. T. Saunders, 14.5.1938

81 East Rd.
Cambridge
14.5.38.

Dear Mr Saunders,

I had a letter from Dr Ewing yesterday informing me that you decline to write to the Home Office in the matter of my permit (for accepting a University post). Would you please let me know if this is so, or if Dr Ewing's information rests on some misunderstanding.

Yours truly
L. Wittgenstein

Saunders – Assistant Registrary of Cambridge University.

Ewing – A. C. Ewing (1899–1973), Lecturer in Philosophy at Cambridge, at this time Secretary of the Moral Science Faculty.

224. From J. T. Saunders, 20.5.1938

Copy to Dr Ewing

G.B.9038 20 May 1938

Dear Wittgenstein,

When Dr Ewing asked me whether I would write to the Home Office about the renewal of your permit to remain in this country, I told him that I could only do so if I was instructed by the General Board. I therefore consulted the General Board at their meeting on Wednesday on the suggestion that I should write on your behalf. The Board agreed that you yourself must take the initial steps in an application for the renewal or continuance of your permit.

Yours sincerely,
Secretary General of the Faculties

Dr. L. Wittgenstein

225. To J. T. Saunders, 23.5.1938

81 East Rd.
Cambridge
23.5.38.

Dear Mr Saunders,

I have received your letter dated May 20th. As I feared, there has been a misunderstanding. There was never a question of applying for a permit allowing me "*to remain in this country*" (as you write), but allowing me to accept a University appointment in this country. If, therefore you have asked the General Board the *first* question, their answer cannot be relevant to my case.

I do not wish however to cause the Board any further trouble, and I shall therefore apply to the Home Office myself if it should be necessary, which I now have reason to think won't be the case.

Yours truly
L. Wittgenstein

226. To P. Sraffa, 25.6.1938

81 East Rd
Cambridge
25.6.38

Dear Sraffa,

I enclose a very discouraging letter from my solicitor which came this morning. Do you think I ought to ask him whether there is any way of speeding up the proceedings? I *don't* think so: It's probably quite impossible and I'll have to be grateful for what's been done already, this is, I suppose, what he wishes to tell me. In my letter to the solicitor I left out the passage about having "serious reasons" etc. entirely, owing to your criticism. I wonder now whether leaving this out was wise.

I had a letter from Pattisson yesterday saying that I have still approximately 300 £ with him. He writes that he's had lots of personal worry lately and so didn't feel like writing. –

Well, so long!

Yours
Ludwig Wittgenstein

I wonder whether I should write another letter to the solicitor saying what my reasons are for wishing the business to go through as quickly as possible.

Pattisson – For his role see **218**.

227. To R. Rhees, 13.7.1938

81 East Rd.
Cambridge
13.7.38.

Dear Rhees,

I'm sure you'll think me a beast for changing my mind again about attending that bl . . . congress. But the truth is, I'm glad I have changed my mind. It was an awful thought to go and sit there among logical positivists and the like; even your presence couldn't make up for all the nastiness. I couldn't however make up my mind not to go until this morning I had an idea which I can't very easily explain to you in writing. The gist of it is that I am thinking of publishing something before long after all so as to end the constant misunderstandings and misinterpretations. I very much want to talk the business over with you. Please forgive my fickleness or, at any rate, suspend your judgement until you've had another talk with me.

I hope very much to see you before long.

Yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

that bl . . . congress – This can only have been the Fourth International Congress for the Unity of Science meeting at Girton College, Cambridge, 14–19 July 1938. (See pp. 383ff. of Friedrich Stadler, *The Vienna Circle: Studies in the Origins, Development, and Influence of Logical Positivism* (Berlin: Springer, 2001); and also "Die wissenschaftliche Sprache: Vierter internationaler Kongress für Einheit der Wissenschaft in Cambridge 1938 Vorträge", *Erkenntnis* 7 (1937–8), 135–422.) It is surprising that Wittgenstein ever had any thought of attending it, even at Rhees's urging.

228. To W. H. Watson, 28.7.1938

81 East Road
Cambridge
28th 7. 38

My dear Watson,

You haven't heard from me for ages and this letter too is only going to be exceedingly short. A friend of mine Mr. J. C. Taylor from Toronto may be passing through Montreal and I want to recommend him most warmly to you. He has been studying philosophy here and is an excellent man in every way. Please give him any assistance you can if he should come to you. – I am very well, as far as health and work goes, but greatly worried by events in Austria. I will write more before long.

Best wishes!!

Yours ever

Ludwig Wittgenstein

Taylor – See note to **231**.

229. From J. M. Keynes, 30.8.1938

Dr. Ludwig Wittgenstein,
81 East Road,
Cambridge.

August 30th, 1938

My dear Ludwig,

I am glad to get your letter about Alister. In truth, it is more important that he should be getting on as well as you say he is than that his Fellowship should be continued. As you know, I am rather out of touch. But my impression is that the question of the Fellowship has been practically settled and that there is no chance of its renewal. If he had obtained a University lectureship, it might make a difference. But, in the circumstances, it would be a very unusual thing to continue him further. A continuation from 3 years to 6, which is what was previously in question, is quite a different thing from the prolongation beyond 6 years.

I rather think, however, that the loss of his Fellowship will not mean that he will leave Cambridge. I am not speaking of this out of knowledge, but I think he has some resources from his parents and will continue much as before. I have, of course, scarcely seen him lately, since I have been away. I will let you know, but, as I say, my belief is that the matter is virtually settled.

Very glad to hear that you are near publishing. I should feel perfectly certain that the Press would take the book as soon as they asked any competent person's advice about it.

I am now vastly better. But I still have bad days. But the important point is that the depressions are not so long or so deep as they used to be. I hope to be quite a bit in residence next term.

Yours ever,
JMK

This letter, an answer to a now lost one from Wittgenstein, is printed from the carbon copy retained in the Keynes Papers. The original was presumably dated from London: the health problems alluded to were the reason for Keynes's absence from Cambridge.

Alister – A. G. D. Watson (1908–82), Scholar and from 1933 Fellow of King's, was an Apostle and a member of both Keynes's and Wittgenstein's circles, particularly liked for his personal qualities. He was distinctly left-wing in his views. He was a kind of adviser to Wittgenstein (as to Sraffa) on mathematical matters and even a spokesman for the former in the Moral Science Club. He published on "Mathematics and its Foundations" in *Mind* 47 (1938) but during and after the war turned to work (for the Admiralty) on radio communication, then sonar, then oceanography. He was later widely suspected of complicity with the Cambridge men who spied for the USSR. He denied this but admitted there was reason to suspect him.

the Press – Cambridge University Press, to whom Wittgenstein offered what is now part I of *Philosophical Investigations* at about this time. In Wittgenstein's notebooks (MS 117) a preface to it is dated to the same month as this letter. See G. H. von Wright's "The Origin and Composition of the *Investigations*", in his *Wittgenstein*, pp. 120–1. It was to be published in both German and English and to be entitled *Philosophical Remarks / Philosophische Bemerkungen*.

230. To R. Rhees, [9.9.1938]

81 East Rd.
Friday

Dear Rhees,

Thanks for your letter. I haven't heard anything from home so far that makes the situation any clearer. I shall just have to wait. –

As you know, I wish you *lots* of good luck with your writing. Just stick to it; and, *if possible*, sacrifice coherence sometimes. I mean, if you feel you could just now say something, but it isn't exactly the thing which ought to come in *this* place – rather say it and jump about a bit than stick to the 'single track' and not get on. That is, if you *can* do it. If you *can't* jump, just plod on. You've still got a damn good chance to make it. And if you can't finish it, send it in nevertheless.

So long!

Yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

send it in nevertheless – A thesis with a view to a Fellowship. Rhees did not send it in, nor did he complete his doctorate, to his supervisor – Moore's – regret.

231. From J. Taylor, 24.9.[1938]

2426 Haste Street
Apartment 1
Berkeley, California
Sept. 24

Dear Wittgenstein

[. . .]

I haven't done any missionary work, and am quite aware that I'm not good enough to, but three or four intelligent people have been keen to discuss with me (the graduate students I mentioned), and I've discussed quite a bit, sort of jumping when they said wrong things the way Moore does, and this hasn't been quite useless to me or to them I think. These discussions aren't unlike the ones I've often had with Smythies or Lewy. Thanks to you I'm clearer about some things than these people have had a chance to be. I don't use things you've said, as Waismann, say, does, or Schlick did sometimes, directly; and if I do use a phrase or an example or an idea of yours, which I try to do as seldom as possible, I mention that it *is* yours. I don't discuss at all if I'm sleepy or fed up, and I try to make the extreme limitations of the pedestrian comments clear. Whether this is any good or not I don't know. I do know that I haven't been ashamed of these discussions, or felt sick after them.

[. . .]

I'm sure you would not like it here at all – that's fairly damning and confirms that it is worse than I expected, on the whole.

Among the small group of pretty keen graduate students your name is something to make people sit on the edges of their chairs with. Though Ganz doesn't seem to have given anybody any specially clear idea of the sort of thing that you do, either. Not that it's possible to, in *one* sense.

People here have been extremely kind and hospitable. In spite of that I don't feel especially at home, or contented. There aren't people like you or like the four or five others I liked at Cambridge. It's a looser way of going on; I'm afraid of getting loose too.

If I had the chance financially I'd go back to Cambridge. Though I don't loathe myself for what I'm doing here – not yet, anyway. But it'll take everything I've got and perhaps even that won't be enough, not to slip. The saving things are that, as I've planned things out, I'm having to work pretty hard. And that, for the present, I can just avoid the bad people.

I read *Der Schmetterling* twice. The sketches are as good as you said they were. I didn't like some of the sourness of the face the author pulls, he's not as hard boiled as he thinks he is, a tougher person wouldn't have needed to be sour about some things. (After I've written the sentence above I see I've put it in a way like the way you once put a comment on Kaffka to me.) But I liked the book.

Belmont asked me about what you had written and what could be seen. I didn't say you might publish soon, since that isn't absolutely certain, I suppose; but I did mention the manuscript in English you dictated to Skinner and Alice Ambrose five

or six years ago. I said I would find out from you if he could see it. When you write, please mention whether you'd rather I didn't let him have it, or if I can.

I hope the small volume you mentioned does get published. I'll look forward to seeing it.

If there's a war that'll change everything, as you said, I guess I'd be in it, as a Canadian, if it lasted long. I think I hope they do go to war about Czecho-Slovakia. It's better to stop the sleigh and have it out with the wolves than to throw Auntie out to them.

Please give my best regards to Skinner.

If you will, write me what your impression of all this is, sometime; i.e., whether I sound like someone who's cheating himself. *Please write what you think.*

I hope you got away to Dublin.

Taylor

Taylor – (1914–46) A Canadian who completed a second undergraduate course at Trinity College. In 1937–8 Wittgenstein held his classes in Taylor's room and had many appointments with him. This letter shows him teaching at Berkeley. He died in an unexplained dispute in a bar on his way to succeed George Paul in Melbourne.

Smythies – Yorick Smythies (1917–80), a particularly favoured pupil of Wittgenstein's from 1937 onwards. Sometimes he was the only one allowed to take notes during Wittgenstein's lectures. Like Skinner (see **176**) he gave up the normal paths of preferment in order to live and think in a Wittgensteinian way.

as Waismann, say, does, or Schlick did sometimes – for Waismann see **150** above; for Schlick **113**. Some of Schlick's later articles have passages reminiscent of Wittgenstein but this is the only even indirect indication that Wittgenstein may have had any objection to this.

Ganz – Abraham Gans, an American who attended Wittgenstein's classes (cf. Redpath, *Ludwig Wittgenstein: A Student's Memoir*, p. 19). Also a pupil of Moore's, whose diary for 22 January 1935 reads: "W. [Wittgenstein] comes as usual and finds Gans with me: argues with him."

Der Schmetterling – One of two fables by Wilhelm Busch (the other is *Eduards Traum*) often recommended to friends by Wittgenstein (see **376** and **378**).

Belmont – See letters to and from Ambrose above (**176** and **177**).

the manuscript in English you dictated – The Brown Book.

232. To P. Sraffa, 29.9.1938

29.9.38

Dear Sraffa,

Of course I know nothing about your plans – but I should like to know whether, by any chance, you intend to go to Czechoslovakia to help there in some way or other; and whether, if this *is* your intention, you would not mind having me with you, to do *something*.

You may ask a) "Why on earth do you think that I, Sraffa, could help in Cz.?" b) "Why on earth should I want *you* to come with me?" To both questions I answers: *I don't know*; but it doesn't seem to me IMPOSSIBLE.

I am now on my way to Ireland; there my address will be:

c./o. Drury
36 Chelmsford Rd
Ranelagh
Dublin

IN CASE you should have any use for me I should be overjoyed, and in this case send a wire to the above address or both to this address *and* to 81 East Rd. I can join you say in Switzerland.

If my idea is phantastic, no harm's done.

Good wishes!
Ludwig Wittgenstein

Writing paper headed "Strand Palace Hotel Strand WC2 London", but address cancelled.

Czechoslovakia – This letter was written on the very day of the signing of the Munich Agreement, which made over German-speaking parts of Czechoslovakia to Germany.

233. To R. Rhees, [3.10.1938]

81 East Rd
Cambridge
Monday

Dear Rhees,

I have come back yesterday from Dublin. Why I came back sooner than I originally intended I'll explain an other time. I found your 1st chapter here and was disappointed that you had not sent it in. I think it was wrong not to do it and I think you ought *still* to do it if there is a chance that it might be overlooked that you're a bit late. I have only glanced at a few pages and can't do more at present, but I didn't *at all* have a bad impression! So why the hell you should wish to be your own examiner I can't see. As I said, there still is a chance of it being accepted I think you ought to send it in.

I hope to see you before long!

Yours
Ludwig Wittgenstein.

send it in – For a Fellowship (see **230** above).

234. To R. Rhees, [6.10.1938]

81 East Rd
Cambr.
Thursday

Dear Rhees,

I'm in bed with a 'flu. I'm looking forward to seeing you! The University Press has accepted my book.

Best wishes!

So long!
Ludwig Wittgenstein.

Thanks for your letter. I see your point; but I still think you might have tried. Anyway I hope to see you soon

L.W.

my book – See **229** above.

235. To G. E. Moore, 19.10.1938

81 East Rd.
Cambridge
19.10.38.

Dear Moore,

I am still not at all well. I am bodily very weak and shaky, and feel incapable of thinking properly about my subject. I cannot therefore start lecturing now, and I don't know whether I shall regain sufficient strength in the next 3 weeks, say, to do so. What the cause of my condition is I don't know for certain, but I believe it is the recent 'flu and the great nervous strain of the last month or two. (My people in Vienna are in great trouble.)

I wonder whether it had not better be announced in the Reporter that I can't lecture for the present and until further notice.

Would you mind letting me know what you think best, or just do what you think best?

Good wishes.

Yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

My people in Vienna – See **217**. During 1938 an attempt to obtain Yugoslav citizenship had even led to a brief but very alarming spell of custody in prison for two of his sisters and a nephew-in-law. (Forged passports had been passed off on them.) During the year that followed Wittgenstein was on several occasions involved in negotiations with the Nazi authorities (and indeed also within the family) which led to a compromise – essentially the conferring of mixed-race status in return for the repatriation of some part of the family property held outside Austria. Wittgenstein had just returned from a flying visit to Zurich (perhaps to his brother Paul), which will certainly have had to do with these negotiations.

I can't lecture for the present – In fact Wittgenstein's next lectures were on the Philosophy of Mathematics in Lent Term 1939 (Norman Malcolm took notes at them). In the Michaelmas Term, particularly in November, Wittgenstein's diary shows that he did a lot of work with a typist. This must have been an attempt to complete his *Philosophical Remarks*, just accepted for publication (see **229** and **234** above), resulting in TS 221 (paginated continuously with, but typed on a different machine from, TS220): see McGuinness, *Approaches*, pp. 283–4.

236. To G. E. Moore, 20.10.1938

81 East Rd
20.10.38

Dear Moore,

I had a note from Ewing today saying that I have been "appointed a member of the Mor. Sc. faculty". Could you tell me what exactly this means? Didn't I belong to the faculty before, and what has changed, now I do belong to it? Do I have new duties, or new rights? If you would let me have a line explaining this I should be grateful. Good wishes!

Yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

P.S. I have seen the program of the Mor. Sc. Cl. I think it's *awful*.

Wittgenstein's Faculty Assistant Lectureship had expired in 1935 and since then relatively small sums had been found to pay for lectures when he gave them. (The Board noted that nothing could be promised after 1938–9: if not elected Professor he might have had no income at all.) His inclusion with the normal list of lecturers re-appointed members of the faculty (a matter of some few voting and speaking rights) had no financial implications but may have been intended to assist his application for a certificate of naturalization or more generally to mark him as not simply one of the emigré scholars given a temporary home at Cambridge.

Mor. Sc. faculty – The traditional name of what has, since 1969, been called the Faculty of Philosophy at Cambridge. A. C. Ewing was secretary of the Board.

Program of the Mor. Sc. Cl. – It included Braithwaite, Ewing, Ryle, Wisdom, and Sir Arthur Eddington (see Redpath, *Ludwig Wittgenstein: A Student's Memoir*, pp. 78–9).

237. To P. Sraffa, 1.12.1938

81 East Rd.
Thursday

Dear Sraffa,

One more point has occurred to me which *may* be rather important. If you accept the Trinity post – though you don't know whether it'll in the end be good or bad for you in the ways we talked about – you do know that it will be a *change of position* and thereby may help to *uproot* you. I.e., you'll have to get up from your present chair and sit down on another one. It will therefore teach you *new* things, and that's a point in favour of accepting.

In a sense, you will loose your job and get another one; *which is at least some motion*. And, as I said, it will teach you new things, give you an experience which perhaps you ought to have. (I don't think it for one moment wrong to accept on those grounds. There is nothing flippant in this.) (I know what can be said against it.)

Ludwig Wittgenstein

Now read this letter again, da capo al fine!

Pencilled date by Sraffa. Sraffa was in the event admitted a Fellow of Trinity on the same day as Wittgenstein himself. The matter had obviously been discussed at length and Wittgenstein had on the whole been in favour of accepting, but Sraffa wrote to Joan Robinson saying, "Wittgenstein advises me to accept, but he has a complicated argument that this may be due to his having accepted the professorship and unconsciously wanting to drag me down into a similar ignominy" (letter of 15.2.1939, when Wittgenstein had been elected to the chair: communicated to the present editor, like much else in the Sraffa world, by Dr Gary Mongiovi). For the "ignominy" compare **372** below, where Wittgenstein fears that Sraffa may have "become a *Trinity Don*: stiff, stand-offish and unfriendly".

238. From the Minutes of the Moral Science Club, 1.12.1938

7th Meeting Dec. 1st, 1938

Doctor A. C. Ewing: A Reply to Mr Wisdom on Meaninglessness.

The seventh meeting of the term was held in the Moral Science Library. Professor Moore was in the Chair. Dr Ewing read a reply to Mr Wisdom on Meaninglessness. He contended that although Mr Wisdom's remarks on meaninglessness were subtler than those of other supporters of the philosophical usefulness of the Verification Principle, yet even his good example did not prevent the Verification Principle constituting a great danger to philosophy.

In discussion Doctor Wittgenstein said he had never heard of the Verification *Principle* till about a fortnight previously. He knew about the method of asking the verification of propositions. The main point of asking the verification of some statement was to bring out distinctions. He did not like calling the statement that the meaning of a statement is the method of its verification, a principle. That made philosophy look too much like mathematics. There are no primitive propositions in philosophy. Mr Wisdom thought that the statement in dispute was just what is ordinarily called a principle, and in any case that to stop being worried one way would be to call it a principle, and *then* call it something different. Dr Wittgenstein thought this exceedingly dangerous. He could not see why Dr Ewing thought the verification method might prove harmful. Dr Ewing said that it might prove harmful if statements which were thought unverifiable were treated as meaningless. Doctor Wittgenstein said that to ask how one verifies a statement is to ask what's done with it. To prove that such a question is useful one has to do philosophy with it. Doctor Ewing said he had not had his thinking illuminated by that sort of question. Furthermore a person might still *treat* a method as if it were a principle, even if he *said* it wasn't.

Doctor Wittgenstein said that Doctor Ewing had expressed the opinion that there was still a question as to whether there are synthetic a priori propositions. The matter came to this: certain questions will either seem futile after a certain process or not. Doctor Ewing: Do you claim to have shewn that there can be no answer to these questions? Doctor W: In a sense I might say there is no answer, in the sense that you won't get rid of them. The Verification Method had stopped people feeling the need to ask certain questions. Mr Wisdom thought Dr Wittgenstein had expressed himself in a way which tempted people to say of him that he intended to stop people asking certain questions. Mr Wisdom thought it would be better to explain that the verification method brought a satisfaction which consists in getting greater grasp of the use of language. Doctor Wittgenstein thought that the best way of shewing whether the method of investigation were useful would be to thrash out one or two problems by means of it. Later on Professor Broad said that if a person was a good philosopher he would try to apply the method to each problem separately.

Theodore Redpath

Redpath was Secretary of the Club at this time and made a point of keeping rather fuller minutes than had been customary. He gives an account of Wittgenstein's interest in and influence on the Club at this period in his *Ludwig Wittgenstein: A Student's Memoir*, pp. 77–88.

1939

239. To J. M. Keynes, 1.2.1939

81, East Rd
Cambridge
1.2.39

Dear Keynes,

I went round to King's College last night with the M.S. but was told that you had gone to London; so I took it back again and shall keep it till Friday unless you want it before then. I want to use the two days to look a little through the translation and perhaps correct some of the worst mistakes. I havent yet had time to do this (queer as this may sound). My translator did about half of the first volume and then had to leave for America where his father died some weeks ago. I'll also give you the German text – in case it's any use to you. Not that I think that it's worth your while looking at it, or at the translation; but as you wish to see it of course you'll get it. (Moore has read most of the German text and might possibly be able to give some information about it.) I'm afraid there's *only one* copy of the English in existence and only one *corrected* copy of the German; you'll get these two copies.

Thanks ever so much for taking all this trouble (in what I believe to be a lost cause).

Yours ever
Ludwig

M.S. – A translation into English by Rush Rhees of the beginning of the then existing version of the *Investigations* (to use the eventual title). A typescript of this exists (numbered 226 in von Wright's catalogue) and does contain a large number of alterations in Wittgenstein's hand. The corrected German typescript still exists as 220a; 220b is one of the uncorrected copies of this; while the other has been broken up for use in later versions of the *Investigations*.

lost cause – Wittgenstein had applied for the Professorship of Philosophy which was to become vacant after Moore's retirement. Keynes was one of the Electors to the Chair.

240. To G. E. Moore, 2.2.1939

81, East Rd.
Cambridge
2.2.39.

Dear Moore,

I had a p.c. on Wednesday from Keynes saying that he would like to see the English version of my book, or whatever is ready of it. I needn't say the whole thing is absurd as he couldn't even make head or tail of it if it were translated very well. But as a matter of fact the translation is pretty awful as I saw today when I tried to go through it in order to correct it before giving it to Keynes. Though I worked quite hard on it the whole day with Smythies we only did 12 pages, because masses of it had to be altered. Tomorrow I must go on with it because tomorrow night Keynes ought to get it. So I'm afraid I shan't be able to come to you in the afternoon. I have written to Keynes that you have read the first half of my first volume and could give him some information about it; for obviously you must be able to get more out of reading the original than Keynes could get out of a bad translation *and in a hurry*. So I *hope* he'll ask you to give him your opinion. By the way, please don't mention to *anyone* that I don't think highly of the translation. Rhees did his very best and the stuff is damn difficult to translate.

I hope to see you soon. Best wishes!

Yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

first half of my first volume – This will have been roughly the first 188 sections of *Philosophical Investigations* (in German): no. 220 in von Wright's catalogue, while 221, probably not complete in January 1939, will have been the second half (see note to **235** above). The second volume was, no doubt, to deal with the Philosophy of Mathematics.

241. To J. M. Keynes, 3.2.1939

81, East Rd
Cambridge
3.2.39.

My dear Keynes,

When yesterday I began to look through the English translation of my book I saw that it was a good deal worse than I had expected, so correcting it seemed almost hopeless. But I went through it nevertheless, as far as I could get in these two days, and corrected it almost word for word, as you will see when you look at the English M.S. I couldn't do more than about 20 pages in this way. If you can read a little German I should try to read the German text. The whole thing seems even more of a farce now than it did a few days ago.

Good wishes!

Yours ever
Ludwig

translation – See **239** above.

242. To J. M. Keynes, 8.2.1939

81, East Rd
Cambridge
8.2.39.

Dear Keynes,

Thanks for your kind note. Yes, the translation is pretty awful, and yet the man who did it is an *excellent* man. Only he's not a born translator, and nothing's more difficult to translate than colloquial (non-technical) prose.

Yours ever
Ludwig

translation – See letters above (**239** and **241**).

243. To J. M. Keynes, 11.2.1939

81, East Rd.
Cambridge
11.2.39.

My dear Keynes,

Thanks for the telegram, and thanks for all the trouble you've gone to. I hope to God that you haven't made a mistake. I know, it's up to me to prove that you haven't. Well, I hope I'll be a decent prof.

Thanks again

Yours ever
Ludwig

telegram – Wittgenstein was elected to the Professorship on 11 February 1939. The electors present were the Vice-Chancellor (H. R. Dean), Broad, Cornford, Hardy, and Keynes from Cambridge, Price of Oxford, N. Kemp Smith (retired from Glasgow), and L. J. Russell of Birmingham, who liked to say that he came because the real Russell could not: this was true to the extent that he was appointed to replace Lord Russell, who was in America. Collingwood, whose opposition Wittgenstein feared, was absent, probably on grounds of health. Price told the present editor that it was a comparatively short meeting: after some discussion Broad said, "We shall obviously have to elect Wittgenstein", Hardy spoke, and the business [administrative] side [of the post] was brushed aside.

244. To P. Sraffa, 11.2.1939

81 East Rd
Cambridge
11.2.39

Dear Sraffa,

I've been appointed prof. I hope the future will show that I wasn't WRONG in applying for the post; for, of course, what drove me to it was to a *great* part (if not altogether) vanity. However it's no use crying over spilt milk and I must hope for the best. – One obvious disadvantage which the appointment has for me is that it makes your forecast correct, and you will therefore be more cocksure than ever in our future discussions. However that also serves me right. If I don't hear from you to the contrary I shall come to you on Tuesday at the usual time.

So long!
Professor Wittgenstein

at the usual time – 1.15 p.m., but in the event this was changed to 4.30 p.m. (Wittgenstein's diary reads "Marshal Library 4.30" while Sraffa's records also note the change of hour.) Roughly speaking the meetings, weekly during terms, were at lunchtime in 1938–9 and at teatime in 1939–40.

245. From the Minutes of the Moral Science Club, 16.2.1939

5th Meeting Feb. 16th, 1939

Mr D. Prince: The Use of a Word

The fifth meeting of the term was held in Mr Braithwaite's rooms in King's. Professor Moore was in the chair. Mr Prince read a paper called "The Use of a Word". He tried to show that the equivalence: "the meaning of a word" = "the use to which the word is put" = "the occasions on which it is used", does not hold.

In discussion Doctor Wittgenstein tried to show the use of the first equivalence, and maintained that nobody in his senses had ever held the second. He thought, however, that in same cases one can *infer* the correct use of a word from the occasions on which it is used, and in some cases one cannot. He said that there is a case in which one couldn't make up one's mind as to whether the difference between two people's remarks which are seemingly conflicting is one of fact or one of language, e.g. if I say "This bike's green" when normally it would be called black.

He later said that to say "I never know whether there is a book on the table" is not a statement about language, but that pointing out things about the notation of a person who says that might clear up his difficulties.

Theodore Redpath

D. Prince – Derek T. Prince, a recent graduate of King's College.

246. From the Minutes of the Moral Science Club, 23.2.1939

6th Meeting Feb 23rd, 1939

*Doctor L. Wittgenstein

The sixth meeting of the term was held in Mr Smythies rooms in King's. The Secretary was in the Chair. There were two guests, Dr Ewing and Mr Braithwaite. Dr Wittgenstein spoke for a short time by way of opening the discussion. He put this question to those present: Why do philosophers ask what is the meaning of a word (a most common word)? Have they forgotten the meaning of the term, etc.?

Doctor Ewing thought the most important cases in which philosophers ask for the use of a word are cases in which they are doing something other than what they think they are doing, e.g. the case of physical objects. Mr Strachey suggested they were asking for definitions or at least trying to find out whether there can be a definition. Mr Braithwaite said he thought the philosopher was in a sense asking for an explicit description of the behaviour of using the word.

Dr. Wittgenstein then asked how a definition acts as a coherent account of the use of a word. He said one might say that a definition draws together the usages of words. Augustine when he asks for the meaning of a word collects usages of the word. He reminds himself. If a definition is an account of the meaning isn't it queer that people should forget it (Prince), for surely a definition is a very simple thing?

Dr Wittgenstein then asked what would be taken as the necessary qualifications for a definition to be an attempt at a coherent account of the use of a word. Must there not be a technique of working with symbols so that the definition seems to show the exact position of the word in question with respect to all these symbols. Suppose one defined number as Frege did, has one given a full account of the use of "number" or "one"? No, there are actual uses of numbers which are not accounted for by it, e.g. counting people. Definition is one peculiar account of the use of a word. Only if you've mastered the technique of the language will you learn the word from the definition. In this sense a coherent account is not given by a definition.

Take the case of a physical object. Is it possible to define "cap" by means of sense-data? Dr W thought it quite easy, but that it leads nowhere.

Why do we want a coherent account at all? Philosophers only ask about certain words. Mr Braithwaite: They ask about words which are typical of a certain group, e.g. table, which is typical of a certain group. Dr W: Yes, but another thing is true viz. if they do ask and they want a definition, they do not want the most natural definition, e.g. of "chair" they do not want the definition "something to sit on". Why are they not satisfied with the normal definition of chair, or, to put the question in another way, why do they wish to ask for the definition of a physical object?

Mr Earle suggested they wanted to define it in terms of philosophers' words.

Dr W asked whether one might say that the philosopher wanted to describe the relation between one type of word and another type of word.

Partly.

St. Augustine found it so immensely difficult to find out what time was. What did he want to find out about time? Someone might say that St. Augustine was not puzzled about the usage of the word "time", which is something pedestrian, but was puzzled about the essence of time, which does not seem so pedestrian. Why was he puzzled?

Mr Rush Rhees said puzzlement often occurred when there was a conflict of uses. Dr W: this is often called a contradiction. He cited a passage from Hertz's Principles of Mechanics, in which the latter said that people ask about the essence of matter etc. because a lot of defining criteria have been hea[p]ed on these notions, and these criteria are in conflict. This irritates our mind, and makes us ask "what is the essence of so and so"? The answer is not given by giving further criteria, but by giving less criteria. When these contradictions are avoided, the question is not answered, but the mind no longer perplexed ceases to ask it. Dr W said he must confess that this passage seemed to him to sum up philosophy.

Nothing is more characteristic of philosophy than to ask oneself the same question a thousand times. One case is that a person never stops doing this. Another case is that a person stops. What is given to you to make it stop? Sometimes a new analogy, which replaces an old analogy.

He had often pointed out that a child is perplexed when a word is seen to have two different meanings. If this is to cease to be puzzling it must be surrounded by other cases.

Dr W then went back to past week's discussion:

In a vast number of cases it is possible to replace "the meaning of a word" by the use of a word. In what way is this useful. Mr Lewy: It may get rid of the idea that meaning is a picture attached to a word. Dr W: How do the use and the picture hang together? Isn't there an entirely parallel connexion, viz. between ostensive definition and use? Suppose I ask: What is a zebra? Does someone pointing to a picture of a zebra involve that he uses the word "zebra" as we do? The connexion of image or picture and use is that as a a matter of fact in an enormous number of cases to one particular image corresponds one particular use, and where it does *not*, which is also in an immense number of cases, there puzzlement arises.

Why is it in a great number of cases useful to ask for the use and not the meaning? Because *meaning* suggests on object, whereas use suggests a number of objects spread out in time.

'In a great number of cases it is advisable to put "use of a word" for "meaning of a word"', is a slogan. Sometimes it is ridiculed: sometimes it is boosted. Both wrongly. If one does philosophy it is natural one should come to certain sorts of step which it is advisable to take. Philosophical investigations are tedious and difficult, and slip the memory. Slogans are easy, and stick in the memory. If the *use* goes but the slogan remains, it is *ridiculous*. Dr W said that although he had often used the words of the slogan, he had never had need to call [it] anything.

It is a colossally important fact that all objects around us have *one* name. What is this a *principle* of?

Theodore Redpath

**Doctor L. Wittgenstein* – The asterisk indicates that this was a starred meeting, to which normally no one whose name appeared in the University Lecture list was admitted. On this occasion Ewing and Braithwaite came as Smythies' guests, since the meeting was in his rooms. See Redpath's account of the occasion in his *Ludwig Wittgenstein: A Student's Memoir*, pp. 79ff.

Mr Strachey – probably Christopher Strachey of King's, who studied Maths and Natural Science, graduating in 1939; later a computer scientist and a Fellow of Churchill College (information from Jonathan Smith).

Mr Earle – T. J. Earle, a recent graduate of St John's College.

passage from Hertz's Principles of Mechanics – Wittgenstein frequently alluded to Hertz's account of the origin and solution of puzzles about notions such as "force" and "electricity" (it is applicable to "matter" also). The question as to their nature or essence "is mistaken with regard to the answer which it expects. It is not by finding out more and fresh relations and connections that it can be answered but by removing the contradictions between those already known and perhaps reducing their number. *When these painful contradictions are removed, the question as to the nature of force will not have been answered; but our minds, no longer vexed, will cease to ask illegitimate questions*" (Introduction to *The Principles of Mechanics*, ed. P. E. A. Lenard (London: Macmillan, 1899; New York: Dover, 1956), pp. 7–8). The sentence italicized (but in German) was replaced as the motto of *Philosophical Investigations* on 27 April 1947 by the quotation from Nestroy on the illusoriness of progress. The theme occurs (and is again connected with Augustine's discussion of "What is time?") in the Blue Book (*The Blue and Brown Books*, ed. R. Rhees (Oxford: Blackwell, 1958), p. 26) and in W. H. Watson's *On Understanding Physics*, pp. 4–5, a book which represents the best of Wittgenstein's thought on natural science. See also Wittgenstein's reply to Popper in 1946 (**358** below).

247. From J. Taylor, 24.2.1939

2203 Cedar St.
Berkeley, Calif., U.S.A.
Feb. 24, 1939

Dear Wittgenstein

[. . .]

Thanks to Marhenke, with whom I've had constant discussions in class, and who's a good critic of superficial criticism, and who has made a good job of clamping down on me where necessary, I see far more clearly than I did when I left Cambridge the limitations of the sort of thing that Moore, and in particular Wisdom, do. I think I have a better idea of what kind of limited value this kind of work has (I think it has a value all right) and where the value stops, and how too much insistence on small mistakes in a book may keep you from seeing what more important things are or aren't involved. You pointed these things out to me last year, you remember; now I see more clearly the truth in what you said. I'm more aware also than ever of the danger there is of your pupils doing bad work. It is very easy to use the things you have worked out in a bad way to be substitute for serious work on any problem. You know better than anyone that this is the case, I think. Finally I'm more clearly aware now than when I left Cambridge of what you pointed out long ago, the smallness of my own talent in philosophy.

You won't find it hard to imagine that the effect of all the above influences and of the total situation here on me has been to make me more and more doubtful as to the value of what I can do in philosophy. I am not going to the devil here exactly, but I am more doubtful about myself and what I'm doing than is good for anybody. At present I perform *some* sort of a useful critical function, and I work hard, and I get clearer about things. This isn't altogether contemptible, but it isn't anything much either. If there were something else in which I had fixed interests, and could do well, I would aim to transfer to it as soon as possible. As things are I have decided to go on here next year if possible – as an assistant. I have taught some classes already, and I can do work that's not worthless, given the set-up, and I feel that this work may be better for me than anything else. I hope it will take me out of my Cambridge shell to some extent, or perhaps I ought to say just out of my shell. And in another year I will know better where I am, just now I am rather confused and things are moving around to new positions.

I have all the letters you have written now, I think; the one that was returned to you came the day before yesterday. Perhaps I should have written a short note the moment I got the one dated Jan. 30, but I planned to write this, and was frantically busy with an essay and classes and other things. I should certainly have written long ago. Thank you for all these unanswered notes.

It seems to me certainly true that the political situation does produce in everybody to some extent the feeling that it doesn't pay to think. It certainly has a tendency to produce that feeling in me. All the more so that nobody here is doing any kind of original work.

I have let Belmont have the Brown Book on the understanding that he doesn't make a copy.

I felt as you do about Munich, I would rather have had a war. Nobody is surprised any longer at anything that Government does, not even at them falling over themselves to recognize Franco. If it is possible, when the time comes, I suppose they will sell out France too, i.e. French colonies.

Thank you for sending a copy of the Preface to your book. It seems to me, so far as I can judge, to be the right one, to make the things clear that need to be made clear. I think it will do good to get it out and get these things clear in people's heads.

You'll have heard about the appointment to Moore's chair when you get this. From what I have heard, you seem to underestimate your chances of getting it.

The Moral Sciences Club Programme for this term does seem very much better (Lewy sent me a copy).

Since you didn't ask me to return the copy of the Preface you sent, I'm supposing I can keep it.

I would *like* to return to Cambridge, and have applied for a fel [lowship . . .].

I'm glad your're fee[ling your]self again, and lecturing.

Yours

J. C. Taylor

Marhenke – An American philosopher, who had been a visitor at Cambridge but was now teaching at the University of California, Berkeley.

Munich – The Anglo-French agreement with Hitler in 1938 allowing him a free hand in Czechoslovakia.

the Preface to your book – A 1938 preface but containing, as Baker and Hacker say, the general outline of that eventually published, which was dated 1945 (G. Baker and P. M. S. Hacker (eds), *An Analytical Commentary on the* Philosophical Investigations, vol. 1: *Wittgenstein, Understanding and Meaning* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1980), p. 19).

248. To G. H. von Wright, 9.3.1939

81, East Road
Cambridge
9.3.39.

Dear Sir,

I'm sorry I caused you the trouble of writing to me. I shall try to explain why the presence of two new people in my class, the other day, greatly disturbed me. – I am, in my classes, doing my utmost to explain a *very* difficult matter to the students who have been attending my classes this term. I know that it is quite impossible for any one coming in in the middle, or at *the end*, of the term to get an idea of what we really are driving at. In fact he must necessarily get wrong ideas. I hope you will understand this, and if you do you will also understand why being aware of this fact disturbs me a lot when I should be concentrating entirely on my subject. If I could, as many other people can, prepare my lectures in writing and then read them off in front of the class the presence of new people would not disturb me. But as I'm unable to do this and have to think things out afresh while I'm talking I am very easily disturbed.

In answer to your letter I suggest, therefore, that if you wish to come to my classes you should begin at the beginning of next term; but please don't come to the last few lectures (2 or 3) in this term. I hope you will see my point and not think me unfriendly in suggesting this.

Yours sincerely
L. Wittgenstein

P.S. If you like, come round to my rooms (at the above address) at 4.30 p.m. tomorrow. It may be easier for me to explain the matter to you when I see you than by writing. If you can't come don't bother to reply. I shan't wait for you longer than until 4.45 p.m.

"It was towards the end of the Lent Term 1939 that two new people appeared at one of Wittgenstein's lectures. Knowing his aversion to such surprise invasions, I wondered what would happen. If I remember rightly, Wittgenstein asked them what they were doing there and whether they intended to follow the course. They didn't really answer his question, at all events to his satisfaction. Indeed he hardly gave them time to, for he added, quite uncompromisingly: 'I don't want any tourists here, you know!' They were, however, allowed to stay for the rest of the lecture" (Redpath, *Ludwig Wittgenstein: A Student's Memoir*, p. 86).

Von Wright describes this incident in J. C. Klagge and A. Nordmann (eds), *Wittgenstein: Philosophical Occasions* (Indianapolis and Cambridge: Hackett, 1993), p. 460: "I went to his class without previous permission from him. I had just arrived at Cambridge and got permission from the chairman of the faculty, C. D. Broad, to attend lectures and classes in philosophy. . . . I accepted Wittgenstein's kind invitation and the conversation we then had may be said to have laid the foundation for our mutual friendship and understanding." Von Wright became both Wittgenstein's successor and one of his literary executors.

249. To P. Sraffa, 15.3.[1939]

81, East Rd
Cambr.
15.3.

Dear Sraffa,

I enclose the note from my nephew with the quotation from Spengler.

This however isn't the reason why I'm writing to you, but the reason is that yesterday when I asked you what your address was going to be in the vac (so I could write to you if anything of interest to me happened) you answered in such a way that I got the impression that you'ld almost rather *not* hear from me. If my impression was correct (or pretty nearly correct) I should like you to *confirm* it.

As to the quotation from Spengler I wish to say that, although it doesn't seem to me to matter in the least that you get nothing out of it, it *does* seem to me important that when I told you the quotation you reacted to it with a smile (of a particular sort). I must confess again that I don't like this phenomenon at all. It is, of course, the attitude of *contempt* for what you don't understand (an attitude you have denounced more than once in our conversations). I *believe* I know how excellent and sound your understanding is, as far as it goes; but I believe that it is very narrowly bounded, and I can't help believing that you have no idea of how narrowly bounded it is.

I *must* say also that this in no way detracts for my respect (etc.) for you. In fact, if I had not as much of these feelings toward you as I have I would not take the matter so seriously. I hope this doesn't sound as though it were meant as an advice from a wiser man to one less *wise*. (You know what I think of myself.)

I wish you a good luck, in every way!

Yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

P.S. This morning my solicitor wrote me saying that the Under Secretary of State has notified them that he is now prepared to grant me a Certificate of Naturalization on receipt of £9. Please keep the note from my nephew, I mean, don't destroy it.

nephew – The note was actually a postcard from "John" (Stonborough) in Vienna, addressed to Sraffa but obviously intended to convey discreetly to Wittgenstein that everything had gone as well as possible (probably in relation to the affair of the false passports referred to in a note to **235** above). Sraffa did indeed keep it. The quotation from Spengler surely had no connexion with the postcard but was simply enclosed along with it.

Spengler – Wittgenstein was much impressed by Oswald Spengler's *Der Untergang des Abendlands* (Munich: Beck, 1923; *Decline of the West*, trans. C. F. Atkinson (London: Allen & Unwin, 1932), mentioning Spengler, alongside Sraffa, as one of the inspirers of his later philosophy. (The idea of "family resemblances" is only the most obvious of Spengler's contributions.) To Drury Wittgenstein said, "You can't put history into moulds. But Spengler does point out certain very interesting comparisons" (Rhees (ed.), *Recollections of Wittgenstein*, p. 113). For Spengler's influence in general see Allan Janik , "Assembling Reminders", in *The Genesis of Wittgenstein's Concept of Philosophy* (Stockholm: Santerus, 2006). See also **428** below.

the vac – In that year from 16 March to 18 April. In fact four meetings are noted in pocket diaries during that period and a number of letters were exchanged (see below).

250. To P. Sraffa, 1.4.1939

81 East Rd
Cambridge
1.4.39.

Dear Sraffa,

I had a letter this morning from my friend, the teacher, whom I had asked for information, saying that the decision would be made on April 5th and that it *looks* as though it would be favourable. The letter is all written in a kind of code but on the whole, it seems that things might be worse than they are. – I wrote to Adrian last night so he'ld have the letter first thing this morning *if* he's in Cambridge. I asked him to send me an answer as soon as possible. Would it suit you if I came round to you on Monday at about 2.30? So long!

Wittgenstein

my friend the teacher – Doubtless Ludwig Hänsel. The issue was a charge brought against Wittgenstein's sisters, who had attempted to acquire Yugoslav nationality and naively accepted forged documents. On 8 April (postmark) Wittgenstein told Sraffa, in a letter not included here, that he had had a postcard confirming this. (An appeal against the acquittal was first lodged and then withdrawn, but neither of these facts will then have been known to Wittgenstein.)

Adrian – Later Master of Trinity, consulted over the choice of a doctor for diabetes; see also **300**.

251. To W. H. Watson, 17.4.1939

My dear Watson,

Thanks for your letter, dated March 19th. I was very glad to hear from you. I haven't published, and God knows if I ever shall. Under the present circs. it's exceedingly difficult for me to work. My sisters are still in Vienna, I can't go there at present and can do nothing to help them. I may in about a month or two try to get to Vienna, if I find that I've got a fairly good chance not to be put into a concentr[ation] camp. I don't think there's much chance of my coming to America. I wish you could come here! I'd love to have talks with you.

Ever yours
Ludwig Wittgenstein

An Easter card. Dated by postmark.

your letter, dated March 19th – Not found.

252. To R. Rhees, 20.4.[1939]

81, East Rd
Cambridge
20.4.

Dear Rhees,

Just come to my classes (the first one will be on Monday at 5 p.m.). If anyone says anything I'll deal with them. I'll be *very* glad to see you there but I know my performances will be awful. I'm upset by all sorts of things and don't yet see at all how I'll be able to concentrate my thoughts sufficiently as to say anything worth saying. *I'm feeling very funky indeed.*

Yours
Ludwig Wittgenstein

Rhees was technically not in residence.

253. To G. H. von Wright, 20.4.[1939]

81, East Rd.
Cambr.
20.4.

My first lecture will be on Monday 24th Apr. in Smythies' room at 5 p.m.

L. Wittgenstein

See **252**.

254. To R. Townsend, 19.5.1939

81, East Rd.
Cambridge
19.5.39.

My dear Townsend,

Thank you for your letter. It's nice to know that you'll be thinking of me on the ship – but I want to say something and I mean it seriously: there is such a thing as neglecting your friends. Thinking of them is nice but it's rather easy and doesn't do them much good. They sometimes need advice, sometimes help sometimes just backing up and if you never see them you give them no opportunity to show you what they need. (I, at this moment, need neither advice nor help. But it's good to know that there is someone somewhere who takes a *real* interest in you.) – It may be a nuisance that in this world we have bodies and senses and can't have purely *spiritual* contact with each other; but there's no getting away from this fact. – Of course I don't *know* that you haven't *most excellent* reasons for isolating yourself. On the other hand I think it just conceivable that you aren't *quite* aware that you're drifting away from friends (who, as I said, have *bodies*.).

What I wish to say comes to something like this: please check up on these items in your accounts. If they're all right I've nothing more to say; only I thought there might be something not quite all right about them. Supposing for a moment that this were so I couldn't, of course, reproach you for it, for in *my* life there's nothing at all that's *all right*. But I should be sorry if you were overlooking something which, I can't help feeling, is rather important.

I wish you lots of good luck.

Yours affectionately
Ludwig Wittgenstein.

Townsend – See note to **151**.

255. To P. Sraffa, [3.7.1939]

Dear Sraffa,

Things are going all right with me so far, but I am greatly worried about my sisters. I should be very grateful to you if you would let me know any piece of news you think I ought to know and don't; if necessary by wire. Please remember me to your mother.

Yours
L. Wittgenstein

Dated by postmark but perhaps written the day before. A postcard sent from Vienna where Wittgenstein arrived on 23 June. He clearly expects any reply to be sent to Austria. See note on next letter.

256. To P. Sraffa, 3.7.1939

Wien, IV Argentinierstrasse 16
July 3rd

Dear Sraffa,

I may have to leave here in two or three days & arrive in London on the 7th in order to catch the Aquitania leaving Southampton on the 8th for New York. In this case I shan't have time to come to Cambridge to fetch money for paying my fare & I'm afraid I must ask you to send me sixty pounds (in some form, cheque or otherwise) to some London address. I suppose the best thing will be to send it poste restante & wire me where I shall find it. It's not yet clear whether I shall have to go to New York but the money must be ready, in case.

I am quite well. I shall wire you if I have to go & possibly I could come to Cambridge for a few hours or we might meet in London if its o.k. with you.

Lots of good wishes. Please remember me to your mother.

Yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

Sraffa evidently replied by a telegram (see below). Wittgenstein in fact went to Berlin from 5 July, no doubt for unforeseen negotiations with the Reichsbank. He returned to Vienna on 7 July and left again on 9 July. He arrived in Cambridge on 10 July and left Southampton for New York only on 12 July on the *Queen Mary*.

257. From P. Sraffa, [5.7.1939]

Am sending what required care of Mr Wintach Swiss Bank 99 Gresham St London EC2 Sraffa [to] Professor Ludwig Wittgenstein Neuwaldeggerstr. 38 Wien 17

A draft telegram in reply to **256** above. The draft originally ran: "Call for fare at Marcel [Wintach, etc.]." This was no doubt altered in the interest of discretion.

258. To P. Sraffa, 24.7.1939

24.7.39

Dear Sraffa!

This is only to say that things over here went very badly. I'm leaving tomorrow for Zurich where conferences continue. It's as hot as hell here and reminds me in many other ways of that place too.

Ever yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

My address: Poste Restante Zurich

Postcard showing the Shelton Hotel, New York City (a particularly eerie picture).

things went very badly – The reference is to his attempts to mediate between his brother Paul and his sisters regarding the concessions to be made to the Reichsbank in return for relative immunity from racial and other laws in the now annexed Austria. See his letter to Sraffa above (**255**). On this matter, D. Edmonds and J. Eidinow, *Wittgenstein's Poker* (London: Faber, 2001), pp. 94–108, give the fullest account yet published. See also "Rediscovered Score Pianist's Last Legacy", *Chicago Tribune* (11 August 2002), a special report by Howard Reich, which contains much interesting information, not otherwise available, from the papers of Paul Wittgenstein. A study of Paul by Mr Alexander Waugh is in preparation and *inter alia* promises to throw much light on this inevitably complicated and secretive affair.

259. From G. H. von Wright, 27.8.1939

Valö, Inga, Finland
27.VIII 1939

Dear Wittgenstein,

My last weeks in Cambridge were very happy indeed. I stayed in Trinity College (as the guest of professor Broad) and enjoyed above all that I was able to do my work in the wonderful Fellow's Garden. This was a very peculiar experience to one, who has to work all the terms in the in many respects so unfavourable and depressive conditions, which Helsingfors presents to a student. I had also several philosophical discussions with younger Cambridge-people and an extremely interesting and (to me) important talk with Moore. These were good completions of my general impressions of "philosophical life" in Cambridge at the present time. I made some observations about the general way of thinking, with which I was confronted in these discussions, and I had liked very much to comment upon them with you. I don't think I can state my point clearly in a letter, but if I may use a sort of metaphor for describing a certain "Ganzheitseindruck" I should say the following: Most of those people, including Moore himself, do not always realize that the whole width and profoundness of a philosophical problem is given together with what may be called "the surface of linguistic expression" and that the "solution" of the problem consists in a careful examination of this surface into its minutest details, but dig after having followed this examination up to a certain point for a "foundation" of the phenomena present on the surface in a "reality" under it. (I do not intend to say that this digging must be connected with some metaphysical theory about the correspondence between language and reality; the phenomenon I am pointing to is not so much a philosophical doctrine as a deeprooted psychological attitude.) This I noticed already in several discussions about the inductive problem, but it stroke me even deeper in a talk with Moore about the so called "absolute certainty" of sentences about sense-experiences. – In the lastmentioned question, by the way, I have lately advanced much towards clearity, especially as regards the problem what is ultimately ment by two sense-data being similar or "the same", in respect e.g. to colour. A thorough penetration of this problem has led me to a bundle of new ideas, which I cannot as yet wholly trace out, but which seem to me to be of greatest philosophical importance. Unfortunately, however, this is a realm where language as it stands is so utterly fallacious and misleading that no short formulations can give even the smallest hint to the "point" I am driving at.

I miss it very much that I cannot now discuss with you this and other philosophical topics, and I do it the more, because there seems to me under present conditions to be no possibility of seeing you again in an appreciable future. I know of what immense importance it would be for my intellectual development to talk with you, and I think also that I could now be of more use for you in your classes than I was last term, when I was quite unfamiliar with your "method" so to say. But I must add very sincerely that already what I got from your lectures and my discussions with you during my time in Cambridge has given me a certain "tune" to follow into a realm of thoughts, on the border of which I am standing, trying to listen carefully in order to

take the right course to the place, from where the tune is emanating. We do not know as yet wheather I shall arrive there or wheather I only shall take the wrong course over and over again, but the fact that I hear the tune is enough to fill me with life-long happiness and thankfulness for that I have met you and been thought by you, even if for a very short time.

(This was ment very seriously, but I am much dissatisfied with my way of expressing myself. It must by no means seem exaggerated or pretentious.)

With all the best wishes.

Georg Henrik von Wright

Ganzheitseindruck – Perhaps "general impression".

260. To P. Sraffa, 3.9.1939

Sunday morning

Dear Sraffa,

I take it that you'll by now be in Cambridge. I've come here to see Drury. It isn't a holiday for I'm not very well and what happens now is enough to make a healthy man sick. I enclose a picture which I want you to keep. I have *hardly any* hope that anything but the worst will happen. If peace is declared on Poland I don't know what I'll do. I hope to see you soon in any case.

So long

Ludwig Wittgenstein

Written on stationery of New Inn Hotel, Pontypridd.

Dated by postmark. Wittgenstein was in Wales with his friend Drury. War was in fact declared before the postmark on the envelope of this letter (8.15 p.m.), as nearly everyone else in England and Wales gloomily but confidently expected.

picture that I want you to keep – Preserved among Sraffa's papers is a rather absurd newspaper photograph of this date ("The King goes to Downing St.") showing the Prime Minister bowing reverentially over the hand of a still young and smiling King George VI.

261. To R. Rhees, 13.9.1939

81, East Rd.
Cambridge
13.9.39.

Dear Rhees,

Thanks so much for your very full information. I am as unclear about what I ought to do as ever, except that I think, just now the right thing is to wait and see whether this war really develops into a war or not for this still seems to me very doubtful. In case it does I suppose one will get a job with the Red Cross pretty easily and not so many occupations will be "reserved". But just now they actually don't need anybody and don't know whether they ever will. So no wonder if they give unclear answers. Thanks again for your kindness. Give my best wishes to Mrs Rhees.

I hope to see you soon.

Yours
Wittgenstein

Red Cross – For a related project, see **286**.

develops into a war – See notes to **263**: in fact Wittgenstein took up work in a hospital only after the German invasion of Russia. See **294**.

262. To R. Townsend, 13.9.1939

81, East Rd
Cambridge
13.9.39

My dear Townsend,

Thanks for your letter, dated August 11th. I was very glad to hear from you. I shall be in Cambridge for 5 or 6 days now. Could you come here? Possibly I'll be here right till term starts at the beginning of October. I feel terribly uncertain about my future and have a kind of longing to jump out of my own skin.

I am sorry to hear that you had a painful business before you left England.

Re neglecting ones friends, I think you perhaps slightly misunderstood me. I didn't doubt that if a friend called you and said he was in desperate need to see you you'ld *make* time to see him – but, if you will only see your friends when they are in desperate need of you *they won't call you* even if they are. That's the point. One doesn't ask a man's help whom one never sees and of whom one only knows theoretically that in a great emergency he'ld come. Partly because an emergency isn't anything clearly defined. –

However I'm not going to philosophize about that.

I hope to see you soon.

Ever yours affectionately
Ludwig Wittgenstein

263. To G. H. von Wright, 13.9.1939

81, East Rd.
Cambridge
13.9.39.

Dear v. Wright,

Thank you so much for your letter, dated Aug. 27th. I was *very* glad to get it. I wish I were in that landscape of yours. It must be similar to the landscape in Norway, which I love. I wish you were here and could help me with my discussion classes. They should start in about 3 weeks; but I can't imagine how I shall be able to lecture. I feel as though, under the present shameful and depressing circumstances, I ought to do anything but discuss philosophical problems, with people who aren't really deeply interested in them anyway.

I should very much like to send you the M.S. of what would be the first volume of my book. I have an idea that it shall never be published in my lifetime and might perhaps be entirely lost. I should like to know that you had read it and had a copy of it. Write me if you like to have it; and if it can be sent I'll send it to you.

I think it goes without saying that I shall always be exceedingly glad to hear from you. I myself am a *bad* correspondent, especially now that everything that I do seems to me futile and I don't know what sort of life I ought to lead.

Let me hear from you before long.

Yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

shameful – Wittgenstein was very doubtful of any serious intention of Mr Chamberlain and his government, "all those rich old men", to fight a real war against Hitler.

send you the M.S. – Von Wright arranged for it to be sent by diplomatic mail but Wittgenstein evidently considered this not safe enough. Later that autumn Finland got involved in a war with the Soviet Union (von Wright, in Klagge and Nordmann (eds), *Wittgenstein: Philosophical Occasions*, p. 461).

the first volume – A book corresponding to the first 188 sections of the later *Philosophical Investigations*. The second volume was to deal with the philosophy of mathematics (von Wright, in Klagge and Nordmann (eds), *Wittgenstein: Philosophical Occasions*, p. 461).

264. To R. Townsend, 15.10.1939

Trinity College
Cambridge
15.10.39.

My dear Townsend,

Thanks for your letter, dated Oct. 3rd. I'm sorry you couldn't manage to see me. I feel pretty rotten in many ways, though less so now that I've moved into College. I have a very quiet room and a very nice bedmaker and that's a lot. I haven't been able to do decent work in my subject for a whole year; to be exact, since the crisis last year. This, I think, is due, partly at any rate, to the nauseating effect political events here and elsewhere have had on me, but it may also be due to age or what not. I seem to be washed up, as a researcher, for good; and this is a serious business for me because I feel I'm no longer really qualified to hold my present post and because I'm oldish and don't know what else to do. Perhaps the war (*if* it should ever become a real war) may solve this problem for me. I should VERY much like to see you, as you know. So if you can bring this about, don't hesitate.

So long!

Yours affectionately
Ludwig Wittgenstein

bedmaker – A servant who made the beds and swept the floors in college. Wittgenstein was in his old rooms at the top of a tower at the end of Whewell Court.

1940

265. To P. Sraffa, [January 1940]

Trin. Coll.
Wednesday

Dear Sraffa,

a) I believe it will be better if I don't come to you on Wednesdays. The reason may be simply that we haven't got enough stuff, at present, which we can talk about *successfully*.

b) I should like, instead to drop in on you occasionally after Hall, risking that you mayn't be in, or busy etc.

c) The disadvantage of this for me is that I shan't see your mother, and I very much want to. I wonder if she'ld be kind enough to allow me to see her sometimes, say, at tea. Would you ask her?

d) If I don't hear from you I'll take it that this is all OK with you.

So long!

Yours Ludwig Wittgenstein

I'll let you have Hardy's book when I get it back, in a very few days.

Dating: Regular Wednesday meetings cease after Michaelmas Term 1939, though there are ones on 7 and 28 February and 17 and 24 April 1940. Other meetings continue irregularly (six in Sraffa's diary for the Easter Term).

Hardy's book – G. H. Hardy *A Mathematician's Apology*, published 1940 by Cambridge University Press. The publisher's announcement of this book forms part of Wittgenstein's Collection of Nonsense. In 1944 he wrote that the remarks on philosophy of mathematics in Hardy's miserable (*elenden*) book were not philosophy at all, but, like all such effusions (*Ergüsse*), could and ought to be raw material for philosophizing (MS 124).

266. From the Minutes of the Moral Science Club, 2.2.1940

*12th meeting Feb. 2, 1940

Prof. L. Wittgenstein: Causal and Logical Necessities.

The 12th meeting of the Society was held in Prof. Wittgenstein's rooms in Trinity. Prof. Moore was in the Chair. Prof. Wittgenstein gave a talk on Causal and Logical Necessities. The chief point of the talk was to show how a proposition which is originally based on experience and accepted as empirical comes to be regarded as necessary and analytic. The idea of causal necessity (or rather, *an* idea of causal necessity) was shown to be intimately connected with, and even due to, the conception of "tracing a mechanism".

The principal point in the discussion which followed was as to the meaning and use of the phrase "self-evident", e.g. when one says that some causal propositions or principles are self-evident.

Casimir Lewy

"*tracing a mechanism*" – The connexion between mechanism and causation is well discussed in chapter 4 of Watson's *On Understanding Physics*. The author professes a great debt to Wittgenstein. Sraffa was particularly sceptical about the use of the notion of causality.

267. To J. Wisdom, [12.2.1940]

Dear Wisdom,

Thanks for your letter. I want to make two remarks. 1) I believe that all you say is honest and true; but I don't believe that it's the *whole* truth. I think there's something most essential which you haven't said, because you weren't aware of it. You *could* become aware of it if you asked yourself the question: would you have thought of broadcasting the fact that you had been bored if not I but Dr. Broad had bored you? – I believe that the true answer to this question is a clue to the whole business.

2) If you say that it's an exageration to call Joad's paper a "rotten attack" it certainly is not an exageration in the sense that I overstated my feelings or that I worked myself up into violent indignation. The words "rotten attack" were a very short but rather a *mild* expression of my opinion of Joad's paper, which I believe to be FOUL, from beginning to end – I will not say more about this because it would be useless.

Thank you again for your letter. I know you mean well, and may you not one day give up meaning well.

Yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

I wish to make one more remark: I should like to have you as a *friend* in this departement; but only if it can be done by being frank with you, and by not hiding disapproval *where I strongly feel it*.

Wisdom – He saw himself as a follower of Wittgenstein's, only insisting that the confusions exposed by the latter were in their way also insights. For the frankness of his public comments on Wittgenstein (and others) see the Minutes of the Moral Science Club both above and below (**189**, **290**).

This letter of Wittgenstein's presupposes a discussion (perhaps rather contentious) in early February at which Wittgenstein took exception to Wisdom's remarks (overheard or reported to him) the day after the meeting of the Moral Science Club (2 February: see **266**) while Wisdom criticized Wittgenstein's reactions at the meeting of the Aristotelian Society (29 January), of which see below. Wisdom then wrote a letter now lost, no doubt frank but irenical in tendency. The present letter is a reply to that one. We now also have (discovered and communicated to me by Mr Jonathan Smith, the Archivist of Trinity as this volume went to press) a draft reply by Wisdom, dated 15 February, printed at the end of these notes.

Joad's paper – Cyril Edwin Mitchinson Joad (1891–1953) was a provocative teacher and popularizer of philosophy particularly well known for his broadcasts on the BBC during the Second World War. He was detested by Bertrand Russell and by most academic philosophers. In a paper "Appeal to Philosophers" delivered to the Aristotelian Society in Cambridge on 23 January 1940 (printed in the *Proceedings* of the Society, vol. 40 (1939–40)) Joad argued that an age such as ours of political unsettlement and religious and moral decline demanded a serious and constructive philosophy such as Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle offered in their time. "Preoccupation with the correct analysis of the meaning of sentences seems to me a form of intellectual fiddling while Rome burns." Wittgenstein attended this meeting with Sraffa. He is related to have commented there that naturally a slum landlord would object to slum clearance. The Chairman tried to ease the tension by saying that of course Wittgenstein did not want to suggest any analogy between Joad and a slum landlord. Wittgenstein said, however, "That is exactly what I was suggesting" (Record (from memory) in R. Thouless's diary, shown to the present editor).

Date of letter estimated by reference to the exchanges postulated above.

Wisdom's Draft

Trin Coll
Cambridge
Feb 15 1940

Dear Wittgenstein

I must substitute for "broadcasting" in your question and ask, Would you have replied to the question, "What did you think of last night?" when asked by Moore, Mace, Lewy "I was bored" had Broad played as big a part and bored me as much as you did?

Re Lewy. Rather less likely as I regard him as prejudiced against Broad and prejudiced in your favour. Moore and Mace I should have replied, "I was bored" I believe. I wished to be bored by everyone. With the same enthusiasm, the same feelings, the same hesitation? No, unless we suppose Broad to have shown the same enthusiasm and to be an equally powerful and therefore shocking figure to attack.

I am not clear as to the innuendo of your question. Is the answer "I would not" to show that I am more afraid of Broad than of you or that I less wish to hurt his feelings?

Here a point – you place undue emphasis upon yourself in the matter. I found the paper boring. I found the evening boring and said so. Asked by Moore whether I found you boring I said, "Well of course he can't be, but in so far as he [can] be he was." When Mace asked quite likely I said, "Yes".

I resent the innuendo of your postscript – that I have at times led you to think that friendship between us was to be bought by your concealing disapproval.

I hope that you did not wish to make this innuendo but merely to state an important postulate.

Yours

John Wisdom

Contractions have been expanded and some punctuation added. As to the content (and the discussion after the Club meeting) *Littlewood's Miscellany* frequently makes clear that honesty about such reactions was valued above consideration for feelings at the Trinity High Table for instance ("Dons break some of the conventions of ordinary life", *Littlewood's Miscellany*, p. 133). Moore was particularly known for his devastating candour. The Joad affair was in a different category.

Mace – C. A. Mace, the Professor of Psychology.

268. From the Minutes of the Trinity Mathematical Society, 19.2.1940

[. . .]

The President called on Professor L. Wittgenstein, who had kindly offered to do so despite his ill-health, to give his lecture on the "The Descent of Mathematics".

First the Professor considered various common sentences into which the idea of comparison entered. Some of these, such as those comparing different human beings, are experiential statements. Others, for instance "Black is darker than gray", are more properly regarded as grammatical. The distinction is important when the ideas of length and measurement are discussed; one of the chief difficulties in mathematical philosophy is that arising from definitions masquerading as experiential statements.

The lecturer went on to discuss other statements which he described as being "well within the region of the obvious", as "the whole is greater than the part". A proposition of this nature is independent of time, but involves certain restrictions on the method of measurement. The comparison of numbers can be made in several ways, including that of assigning an ordered symbol to each of the objects which is to be counted and that of one-to-one correlation. The result obtained by the different methods is found by normal adult observers to be always the same, except in a few cases when the difference can be supposed to be due to an error, which a further investigation could correct.

Professor Wittgenstein explained that it was possible to conceive systems in which this was not the case, and for which two or more results were equally correct. He considered the Russellian definition of addition, and summed up by saying that the introduction of definitions involves a new technique. Questions were asked about the relationship of physics to mathematics. After many unsuccessful attempts, the President finally took advantage of a momentary lull in the Newman–Wittgenstein controversy to thank the Professor for his lecture and to declare the meeting social [. . .] at 22 hrs. 55 mins.

the Newman–Wittgenstein controversy – No doubt a dispute with M. H. A. Newman, also present.

269. From G. H. von Wright, 22.2.1940

24 Idrottsgatan, Helsingfors, Finland
22.II 1940

Dear Wittgenstein,

As you probably will know from newspapers there is a war going on in Finland since the end of November. It has changed in the most brutal way the ordinary aspect of life in this country and will, not unlikely, never allow the people now living here to return to their previous activities. With the outbreak of the war one has been compelled to leave every thought on the future and to cut off the connexion with the past. One is living in a quite new world, which knows only the present tense.

This may serve as an explanation, why I have not been able to write you anything of interest about my occupations and my thoughts. In writing this letter I have had in mind principally to let you know that I still exist and also to express my most whole-hearted hopes and wishes that you are getting on well and not feeling too unhappy in spite of the depressing conditions of the world.

Bodily I am sofar quite allright. I have not suffered any damage either from the frequent airraids or from the unusually cold winter. Nor have I had to suffer from lack of requisites of life of any kind. My present occupation is not that of an actual soldier, but I am what is called here a "military official". The work I have to do is not alltogether uninteresting, but of a very "unmartial" kind. Soon, however, I shall be going to the frontier for a short time (and in my present job).

It is a pity, if one may use such an expression, that all this would occur to me in a period of my life, when I am feeling every day that new and important thoughts are ripening in my mind, without my being able to taste the fruit and examine, if it really is what I expect it to be. Momentarily I feel that I have never been so full of life, sincerity and love of attacking problems as I am now. One does not know for how long this vitality of mind will last; perhaps it will disappear under the pressure of the external circumstances, in order never to come again. At present it is my greatest duty to fight against this pressure and so long as I can do it successfully I know that I am still mentally alive, still able, when outward conditions again become normal, to continue the way I have begun.

But on the other hand I feel a certain happiness at the thought that if I now have to die I am doing it with a happy mind, without having had to experience (or perhaps not experience) this process of getting tired and, in the worst cases, selfsatisfied, which seems to me to be the *finis* of so many lifes, also of earnest and nice people. Philosophical clearity, in a certain sense, cannot be perpetualized in the form of "systems" or "theories", but is the characteristic of a certain state of mind and is born and lost together with this state. The acitivity of a philosopher reaches it's climax in the philosophical "Augenblick" and it is in a way illusory to immagine that these "Augenblicke" could be summed up to a greater whole. Therefore longevity is not very much desirable to a philosopher.

This letter is a terrible mixture of vague and incorrect expressions. I hope you will foregive it. I have written it, becaus[e] I have for a long time felt a *very strong* need of getting into contact with you. I should like to *show* it in some way and not to tell it (as

I am doing here) that there is no person to whom I am more indebted in my intellectual development than to you and that hardly anybody has left me with so many nice and fair and refreshing recollections.

Yours sincerely
Georg Henrik von Wright

a war going on in Finland – This was the first or Winter War against the invading USSR, which started on 30 September 1939 and ended on 12 March 1940 with the Treaty of Moscow. Von Wright was working on the Home Front mostly writing press releases for the government. He did this also in the second war, when Finland tried to regain its lost territory after the invasion of Russia by the Germans (now become allies). A number of his letters from the earlier period were printed without his knowledge by C. D. Broad in the *Cambridge Review* (1939–40) ("Letters from Finland").

going to the frontier – probably "to the front" is meant. The Russians were already well past the frontier.

270. From J. H. Clapham, 28.2.1940

Storeys End
Cambridge
28 February 1940

Dear Professor Wittgenstein,

Smythies only came before the C.O. Tribunal today. I "put in" your letter. In fact he put in a very full and elaborate document with various hypothetical cases of conscience – in what circumstances he ought or ought not to go to prison. He cannot have studied the law very closely, for the risk of prison is extremely small.

His sincerity was obvious. The only question was what to do with him. We ended by giving him complete exemption because (i) of the sincerity (ii) his equally obvious unfitness for the work of an agricultural labourer or some such job which would not clash with his conviction.

I do hope he will find some occupation which will satisfy his conscience and his mind. (He says he is leaving Cambridge at the end of this term.) But I do not find it easy to picture what that occupation can be. He seemed to us singularly remote from the external world – the conventional philosopher. [MS addition in Wittgenstein's hand for Sraffa's benefit:] I say!

Yours sincerely
J. H. Clapham

Provenance: Trinity College Library among Sraffa's papers.

Clapham – Sir J. H. Clapham, CBE, later became Professor of Economic History and Fellow of King's, a friend, though in many ways an opponent, of Keynes. It will be seen that he was a member of Smythies' Tribunal.

Smythies, who was a conscientious objector, related to his friend Frank Cioffi that before going to his Tribunal he called on Wittgenstein and Sraffa (this may have been on 24 February, when a meeting between them is attested in their diaries), who severely criticized the arguments that he proposed to present. He admired them for this (which surprisingly seems to have done him no harm). After a period of training Smythies found employment as a librarian in an institute of forestry at Oxford.

271. To N. Malcolm, 26.3.1940

Trinity College
Cambridge
26.3.40.

Dear Malcolm,

Your letter and the magazines arrived here simultaneously a day or two ago. I found them here today on returning from a week end excursion to Hastings. Thanks awfully! I'm sure they're grand. My critical eye can see that without having read them, because my critical eye is an X-ray eye and can penetrate from 2 to 4000 pages. That's in fact how I got all my learning. Now please take it easy! One magazine a month is *ample*. If you send me more I won't have time to do any philosophy. Also please don't waste your money on mags for me, and see that *you* get enough to eat! I'm glad to say Smythies has got unconditional exemption. I shall give him your regards when I see him tomorrow and as I know that he'll send you his I give them to you right now. My lectures have gone moderately well this term and I hope they won't be too awful next term. I'm feeling a bit run down just now. I'm extremely glad that you've found kind people to stay with. I wish you lots of good and decent thoughts.

Yours affectionately
Ludwig Wittgenstein

Malcolm – Norman Malcolm (1911–90) came from Harvard to Cambridge for the academic year 1938–9 and attended Wittgenstein's lectures. They became good friends as their correspondence and his *Memoir* show. At this point he was teaching and finishing his doctorate at Princeton.

magazines – Malcolm mentions a series published by Street and Smith, where each number contained several short detective stories (Malcolm, *Ludwig Wittgenstein: A Memoir*, p. 30). See later references, particularly **274**.

exemption – From military service: see **270** above.

272. To R. Rhees, 5.4.1940

Dear Rhees,

I got your letter here. I'll be back in Cambr. tonight. Was very glad to hear from you. I *like* the idea of your doing work in a factory. You'll get better and better I have no doubt, if you can stick. Best wishes to both of you. I hope to see you before long.

Wittgenstein

work in a factory – See **288** below. Wittgenstein often recommended manual work to his friends (Arvid Sjögren, Francis Skinner, Norman Malcolm (see his *Ludwig Wittgenstein: A Memoir*, p. 30)) and had himself worked as a gardener in Austria and making packing-cases in Norway.

273. From the Minutes of the Moral Science Club, 23.5.1940

Mr Isaiah Berlin of All Souls College, Oxford, read a paper on "Solipsism"

[in default of fuller minutes Berlin's own account is inserted here:]

"All of the Cambridge philosophers turned out – Braithwaite, Broad, Ewing, Moore, Wisdom and a sixth figure, small and handsome of feature, who appeared surrounded with acolytes in tweed jackets and white shirts identical to his own. This was Ludwig Wittgenstein. Berlin delivered his paper on how one could have knowledge of others' inner mental states. It was, he remembered, "terribly boring". After a few initial questions, Wittgenstein became impatient and took over the discussion. Berlin remembered him saying, "No, no, that's not the way to go about it all. Let me. Don't let's talk philosophy; let's talk business with each other. Ordinary business. In ordinary circs, I say to you, 'You see a clock. The minute hand and the hour hand are both nailed to the clock face to certain ciphers. The whole face goes round, but the time remains the same. No? That is solipsism.' "

Isaiah Berlin – (1909–97), a philosopher from Oxford, later widely regarded as an historian of ideas and, more generally, as a sage.

Berlin also noted: "In Oxford the imminent fall of France was on everyone's mind. In Cambridge the otherworldliness of the dons was unreal." On the real date of the meeting the fate of the British Expeditionary Force, now confined to a bridgehead at Dunkirk, would have been the immediate cause of concern.

On Berlin's account, even though Wittgenstein thanked him for an interesting discussion, it was clear to him that Wittgenstein had ("and rightly") not been much impressed by the content of the paper. This played some part in Berlin's turn away from an "active philosophic career" (as opposed, e.g., to the history of ideas) (Michael Ignatieff, *Isaiah Berlin* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1998), p. 94; quoted by kind permission). (The text describing the meeting is from this book; the Club Minutes merely record the speaker and the title of his paper.)

The account is based on recorded conversations with Berlin. The editor of the present volume heard the same story from Berlin with trivial variations. Ignatieff (and no doubt Berlin) dated the meeting to 10 June 1940, which is highly improbable, and gives the title as "Other Minds". The date and title here are those given in the Minute Book of the Moral Science Club.

274. To N. Malcolm, 29.5.1940

Trinity College
Cambridge
29.5.40.

My dear Malcolm,

Thanks for the magazines. They're grand but, of course, not as grand *as* 'Detective Story' mags. I wonder why you tried to be original instead of sticking to the good, old, tried out stuff. – My lectures didn't go *too* bad this term, and last week I had an 'at-home' and I'm intending to have at-homes regularly now because I have an idea it might steady people a bit if they go on with *some sort of* decent thinking *in spite* of the unrest they feel. Of course if people should cease to come that'll be just that. Smythies is still in Cambridge, and, for my *own* sake, I'm glad he is. Moore isn't looking too well these days. I saw him this morning and he was as nice as ever.

Good luck!!

Affectionately
Ludwig Wittgenstein

magazines – See **271** above.

the unrest they feel – For the war situation, see note on **273**. There is a similar thought in a letter to Rhees of 3 June: "I thought it might steady people a little to have to think about something strenuously now and then."

275. To R. Townsend, 31.5.1940

Trinity College
Cambridge
31.5.40.

Dear Townsend,

A year or two ago a sister of mine visited me in Cambridge and brought with her some valuable musical manuscripts and some jewelery and gave them to me in order that I should keep them for members of my family which may one day need them. I deposited the things (two parcels) at my bank, Barklays Bank, Benet Street Cambridge and arranged for two people beside myself to be entitled to take them out of the bank. These two people are J. M. Keynes, the economist, and Piero Sraffa, a Fellow of my College of whom you might have heard. I have now decided to entitle you too to take out the stuff if anyone of my family should require it. My reason is this: I am not young, a foreigner, and therefore perhaps in some (though not great) danger, Keynes is old and ill, and Sraffa who is the ideal man for my purpose is an Italian and may be interned any day if Italy should enter the war. You are youngish and, *comparatively*, safe. I have given my bank your name and they now need a specimen of your signature, by which they'll be able to identify you. So please send *me* a slip of paper with your ordinary signature on it. – I am in good bodily health but, as many people, find this time trying. Particularly the silly attitude (as it *seems* to me) of people I see. – I hope you will not lose all contact with your friends. They may not be much use to you now and you may not be able to help them materially and yet there's a *great* point in not losing contact with them. If you should think that I'm a fool you might easily make a mistake. I wish you a lot of *life*.

So long!

Yours affectionately
Ludwig Wittgenstein

valuable musical manuscripts . . . – Family possessions smuggled out of Austria: it was important that they should not be identified as the property of enemy aliens, so they were said to be the property of Felix Salzer, Wittgenstein's nephew, by then in New York. Some idea of the nature of the manuscripts can be obtained from I. Suchy, A. Janik, and G. Predota (eds), *Empty Sleeve: Der Musiker und Mäzen Paul Wittgenstein* (Innsbruck: Studienverlag, 2006), a set of essays on Wittgenstein's one-armed brother. See also E. F. Flindell,"Ursprung und Geschichte der Sammlung Wittgenstein im 19. Jahrhundert", *Musikforschung* 22 (1969), 298–313, and Sotheby's catalogue of "The Salzer Collection: Fine Music and Continental Manuscripts" (London, 17 May 1990). That collection included, for example, a Mozart Rondo and a Beethoven Cello Sonata.

276. To W. H. Watson, 17.6.1940

Trinity College
Cambridge
17.6.40

My dear Watson,

A friend of mine, Mr. John Wisdom, who is a lecturer in philosophy at Cambridge intends to send his 6 year old boy, and possibly his wife, to Canada, for reasons which you can imagine. I should be greatly obliged to you if, in case they come to Montreal, you would assist them in whatever way you can.

I find this time very trying and *exceedingly* hard to work in; but I intend trying to think about my subject as long as I have the *physical* possibility to do so. My health is moderate.

I'm glad that Wisdom's trouble compelled me to write to you. I like remembering you, and I hope you're getting on moderately well.

Good luck!

Yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

277. To N. Malcolm, 22.6.1940

Trinity College
Cambridge
22.6.40.

My dear Malcolm,

Thanks for your letter da[ted] May 31st and for the $1^{1}/_{2}$d. They'll come in very handy. Congratulations to your Ph.D.! And now: may you make good use of it! By that I mean: may you not cheat either yourself or your students. Because, unless I'm very much mistaken, *that's* what will be expected from you. And it will be *very* difficult not to do it, and perhaps impossible; and in this case: may you have the strength *to quit*.

This ends today's sermon. – I've had a good deal of worry lately as Skinner, about a month ago, fell ill with something called "glandular fever" of which he's only now recovering slowly. – I saw Moore the other day and his healt[h] is all right and he is in quite good spirits. – I have found it almost impossible to work for many weeks, and I have therefore arranged with Lewy that I'ld give him every day an hour or two of talk on the foundations of maths and similar subjects. It doesn't do him any harm and it helps me and seems to be the only way just now to get my brain moving a little. It's a shame – but there it is. – Smythies has gone down and I don't know exactly where he is but I hope to hear from him soon.

May I not prove too much of a skunk when I shall be tried.

I wish you good not necessarily clever thoughts, and decency that won't come out in the wash.

Affectionately
Ludwig Wittgenstein

If Skinner knew that I was writing to you I know he'ld like me to send you his best wishes, so here they are: ……

your students – Malcolm was now teaching at Princeton.

May I not prove too much of a skunk when I shall be tried – At the Last Judgement (on Malcolm's understanding).

278. To W. H. Watson, 19.7.1940

My dear Watson,

Thanks so much for your kind letter, dated July 3rd. Mrs Wisdom and her son are both going over to Canada, so Wisdom writes me, but he doesn't write the date of their departure. Mrs Wisdom will try to see you when she arrives at Montreal. I hope this won't cause you too much trouble, or at least no unpleasant trouble.

I have a lot of M.S.S. here, in fact all my research of the last 10 years, none of which has been published. – About $2^1/_2$ years ago I gave all my M.S.S. to Trinity College and most of them are at present in the college library. How safe they are there God only knows. The best thing now is to feel fatalistic about all these things. Your idea of sending the M.S.S. over to Canada is good, but, somehow, I don't think I'll do it. It's all a gamble.

This time has a very queer effect on one's nerves and on one's thinking. I *hope* whatever happens I'll act *moderately* decently.

I wish you lots of good luck!!

Yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

gave all my M.S.S. to Trinity College – See **215**.

whatever happens – At this point it seemed very probable that England might be invaded.

279. To R. Townsend, 19.7.1940

Trinity College
Cambridge
19.7.40.

Dear Townsend,

I wonder how you are. I don't dare to leave Cambridge now as, if things should start happening while I was away, I might not be able to come back, and I don't want to leave Skinner in any serious trouble – though God knows whether I'll be able to help him in the least. Are you going to be anywhere near here before long? I should like to hear from you soon.

I've been reading a good deal lately in a book called "Prayers and Meditations" by Dr Johnson. I like it very much.

I wish you good luck, outside and inside!

Affectionately yours
Ludwig Wittgenstein

if things should start happening – There were of course fears of an invasion at this time. Skinner's health was not good.

280. To P. Sraffa, 26.7.1940

Trinity College
Cambridge
26.7.40.

Dear Sraffa,

I've had a book seller send you "The thin man", a detective story I told you about a few months ago. Read it and don't be ashamed of liking it even though you know that I liked it. I've seen your mother several times. She looks well and didn't seem a bit depressed.

Hutt has been called up.

I had quite good news from my sister in New York.

I am and feel just as usual.

Yours
Ludwig Wittgenstein

I've had a book seller . . . – Sraffa was interned in the Isle of Man as an enemy alien from July to October 1940. Unlike Wittgenstein (who faced different problems) he never sought naturalization.

281. To R. Rhees, 14.8.1940

Trinity College
Cambridge
14.8.40.

Dear Rhees,

I was glad to hear from you and that you had given my name as a reference. *Of course* it's no bother to me! – I'm very sorry, however, that you are thinking of giving up your present job! You may not do it *exceedingly* well, you may, at times do it badly, you may at times feel *very* depressed about it, but this will be the case *whatever* you do. I know it's none of my business and you haven't asked my advice, but I can't help saying: please stick to your present job if it is at all possible. It's an honest job anyway and it has 1000 advantages compared with teaching in a school, advantages which with very little imagination you can tell yourself.

No job will ever *absolutly* and *entirely* fit you (just as ready made clothes don't ever fit certain people). What I mean is: please beware of drifting between jobs but thank the Lord that you've found one which however moderately, fits you somewhat.

Forgive me for writing to you in this way.

Yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

282. From W. H. Watson, 8.9.1940

3560 University St.
Montreal,
8th Sept. 1940

My Dear Wittgenstein,

After being away from this city most of the summer I returned with my family about a week ago. Mrs Wisdom came to see us on Thursday evening – I had previously spoken to her for about an hour a month ago. She seemed somewhat upset at first but calmed down later on. [. . .] she was very keen for us to make an immediate decision to take Tom under an arrangement by which she would contribute $5 per week. But [. . .] she had been given a choice from four alternative homes where people are much better off financially than I am and where there is adequate help. (My wife has no help with 2 boys.) My delay in postponing a decision evidently forced Mrs Wisdom to accept an arrangement made for her and this letter is intended to make the situation quite clear to you. I feel sure you will understand that if Tom had been coming alone the situation would have been different and that in any case I intended to see that he would be well cared for.

You needn't infer from the frankness of this letter that there has been any unfriendly exchange with Mrs W. There hasn't. She is going to bring Tom along to see us some day soon [. . .]

I notice that you have to get a new master at Trinity. Wouldn't you enjoy having Sir Arthur Eddington?

I hope you are well and bearing up in spite of the times

Tell Mr Wisdom not to worry about his family.

Yours aye
W. H. Watson

a new master at Trinity – In fact the historian G. M. Trevelyan was appointed. Wittgenstein's Collection of Nonsense contains his form letter ("Dear Wittgenstein . . .") announcing his intention of being "normally (though not quite regularly)" at a certain place within stated hours "to put myself within easy reach of individual members of the Society". Trevelyan had been a contemporary and associate of Russell's and had taken part in efforts to get Wittgenstein, or at least his work, out of the prison camp in 1918–19.

283. To W. H. Watson, 1.10.1940

Trinity College
Cambridge
1.10.40

My dear Watson,

Thank you for your letter, dated Sept. 8th. I am *very grateful* to you for having written me so frankly. That will make it easier for me to ask you a favour again some other time when I may need it. (This may sound paradoxical but it's true.) I think I understand the situation *pretty* well, and that things would have been different if Tom had come alone. My work has been going *very* badly for over 6 months. I'm feeling depressed and lots of things seem to be weighing on my mind. – I wish I could see you and chat with you. One of the worst things I feel is the utter hopelessness of a job like mine in these days, the utter impossibility, for a hundred reasons, to do anything like teaching philosophy to *anyone*.

I wish you good luck! May we meet again some day!

Yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

284. To N. Malcolm, 3.10.1940

Trinity College
Cambridge
3.10.40.

Dear Malcolm,

Thanks for your letter, dated Sept 9th. I was glad to hear from you. It'll be fine to get detective mags from you. There is a terrible scarcity of them now. My mind feels [all] underfed. – As a matter of fact I've been feeling pretty rotten most of this summer. Partly because of bad health, partly because my brain was no d . . . good at all and I couldn't work. I'm feeling a bit better now: that's to say, my hea[lth] is *entirely* all right and my mind seems a little more active. But God knows how long that'll last. I wish you good luck; in particular with your work at the university. The temptation for you to cheat yourself will be *overwhelming* (though I don't mean more for you than for anyone else in your position.). *Only by a miracle* will you be able to do decent work in teaching philosophy. Please remember these words, even if you forget everything I've ever said to you; and, if you can help it, don't think that I'm a crank because nobody else will say this to you. – I haven't heard from Smythies for about 4 months. I don't know why he doesn't write nor where he is, or anything. I see very few people these days. Skinner is almost the only person I see regularly. He has to work long hours but he's in good health. I don't see Wisdom at all. I've heard from a friend of mine in Montreal about Mrs. Wisdom. I think she's all right. – Good luck!

Affectionately
Ludwig Wittgenstein

I haven't heard from Smythies – Smythies eventually wrote on 6 November (in a letter later partially censored by a friend) explaining the financial and emotional difficulties that prevented from coming to see Wittgenstein and proposing a visit though fearing it might now not be welcome. To all appearance Wittgenstein easily overcame this estrangement.

a friend of mine in Montreal – W. H. Watson (see **282** above).

285. From the Minutes of the Moral Science Club, 25.10.1940

*2nd Meeting Oct. 25th, '40

Prof. L. Wittgenstein: "Other Minds"

The second meeting was held in Mr. T. Moore's rooms in Trinity, with Mr. Lewy in the chair. Prof. Wittgenstein read a paper in which he discussed various problems connected with other peoples' minds. First he mentioned several of the answers which have been given to the question "How do we know of the existence of other peoples' minds?", and explained why he considered the analogical argument to be unsatisfactory. Then he discussed the nature of this question itself; and, among other things, described at some length the sort of circumstances under which he would wish to say that a person did not believe that other people had minds, or did believe that flowers felt.

A discussion followed.

Timothy Moore

Mr. T. Moore's room – G. E. Moore's son, who was an undergraduate at this time.

286. To R. Townsend, 13.11.1940

Trin. Coll.
Camb.
13.11.40.

My dear Townsend,

I was *very* glad to get your letter. My health for the last 2 months or so has been all right; but my mind isn't functioning at all well. The causes are partly external partly internal. I'm not busy, I'm lazy and I'm stupid, and my thoughts are mainly turning round matters which they ought not to be turning around. My classes at the beginning of term went very badly; they have improved a bit lately. I haven't got a single really intelligent and serious pupil. It's a pretty awful class, some looking blasé, some sleepy. – I'm taking a first-aid course now and I intend to take an exam at the beginning of December. It's rather likely that I shan't pass it and even if I do that it won't be any use for me; but it *might*. – I see *very* few people now-a-days, in fact too few, and it gets more difficult for me to make contact with people the older I get.

Let me hear from you again before long.

Yours affectionately
Ludwig Wittgenstein.

a first-aid course – Wittgenstein's papers included a certificate, dated December 1940, that he had attended a course of instruction at the Cambridge Branch of the St. John Ambulance Association and had qualified to render "First Aid to the Injured". This is some evidence that Wittgenstein was beginning to believe that the war was a real one (see **260–3** above).

287. From G. H. von Wright, 9.12.1940

Helsingfors, Finland
Idrottsgatan 24
9.XII 1940

Dear Wittgenstein,

[. . .]

I sincerely regret that I wrote you a long letter about my ideas on probability, expounded in a paper to Mind. It was a fruit of the enthusiasm which I feel to be my dearest preciousness. It was so to speak a tune.

Dear Wittgenstein! If I only knew that we could meet again, then this misery would be easy to bear. But there is unfortunately not much hope.

With the best wishes. Yours sincerely

Georg Henrik von Wright

P.S. In a letter from September 1939 you mentioned a MS which you wanted to send to me. If that can be done in a safe way I should be very glad to get the thing. Anyway I do not think there is any possibility of sending it away by "ordinary" mail. But if you applied to Mr. von Knorring at the Finnish Legation, who is informed about this, you might – if *he* thinks it advisable – have the M. S. enclosed in a diplomatic bag and sent to Finland by air.

[. . .]

For music and reading there has been very little time. Only one great "Erlebnis" deserves mentioning. I remember that you once in our conversations about music whistled a tune from Beethovens quartetto in F-dur, which I did not know at this time. Now I know it from records. It is certainly one of the most wonderful things that have ever been created. I wish you could hear it now.

I hope you will not feel annoyed, if I finish my letter with this confession:

In these days of complete uncertitude about the future and – sometimes at least – the intensest feelings of unhappyness, I very frequently recall memories from my life before the war. And I am prepared to say that of all things that I have experienced in my life before that date I should least of all miss that I have met you. We met only five times (exclusive the lectures and the gatherings of the Moral Science Club), and we mostly did not discuss very important things, neither could I always when we discussed philosophy follow you the way out. But still I got something (I seriously do not know exactly what)

a long letter about probability – This exists and is preserved in Trinity College Library but is not of particular interest for the present volume.

288. From R. Rhees, 31.12.1940

96, Bryn Road,
Swansea.
December 31st, 1940.

Dear Wittgenstein,

[. . .]

With regard to your telegram of last September: If I did give the impression that I did not want to see you, that impression was certainly false. I was rather afraid to see you, because I thought you would be disgusted with me for taking this job here. But I did wish very much that I might see you before the beginning of the session. What kept me from it were external circumstances and nothing else.

If this apology is out of date (it doesn't seem so to me, because it's roughly what I wanted and intended to say at the end of last September), I suppose the considerations which led me to change my job are even more so. I would like to say that I didn't just disregard your advice. I was worried by your suggestions at the time when I finally did decide to come here; and I have seen a number of things which favour your view since then. My welding kept on being bad, and I thought (not so stupidly either) that it probably would never develop into anything decent. There was a lot more that was connected with this, but I'd better leave that out. I mention two considerations which played a considerable part. One was that such training as I had had was in the academic and pedagogical line. (I was constantly aware that I was a duffer in a machine shop, and that this was *partly* because I hadn't had an apprenticeship there as a youngster.) It seemed then that I *might* be more useful if I were in some job in which the training I had got might help. Another consideration, I confess, was a saying of yours which kept recurring to me. Your first opinion, when I suggested that I might go in for welding, was that it was foolish for me to try it. And one of your remarks about that sort of job generally was, "It's too impersonal". This kept going around in my head as I kept making a mess of things. I had constantly the feeling that I was useless, – all right, all right but that is what I felt, and I wished I didn't, – and I kept wondering whether I might be able to give some help to somebody if I were in a job that were less impersonal. That's confused, I suppose, but that's the way it seemed to me then. And when Heath wrote offering me this deputy post here, I finally took it; though not right off the bat.

Of course it looks different now. The business about my training making me fitted for this kind of job is plain rubbish. And I don't know how much good I should do anyone if I were better. Well, I am appointed here until June now. There's not much point in trying to make long term plans. But I suppose that if I'm alive and not in government service after June, I may make a stab at getting back into welding again. I don't know.

I keep wondering what Cambridge is like now, and what you are discussing in your lectures. There is more I'd like to say now. Part of it things I've wished I could say to you for a long time. Perhaps I never shall. I don't want to keep this letter back now, anyway.

Another to whom I have been wanting to write for a long time is Skinner. I hope I may snap out of it soon.

I wonder if you can communicate with your people at all.

Sincerely,
R. Rhees

Heath – A. C. Heath, Professor of Philosophy at Swansea at the time. Rhees had taken a post there, where he remained for the rest of his teaching life. He retired early, apparently to edit Wittgenstein's papers. He returned to Swansea at the end of his life.

1941

289. To P. Sraffa, 8.1.1941

Trin. Coll.
8.1.41.

Dear Sraffa,

I'm afraid this is going to be a longish letter; but I think it's better that I should write it badly and long-windedly than not at all. Last night, in your room, I made a remark which I think you may not have understood, as I expressed myself badly, but which I *want* you to understand. I said that my brain had deteriorated and I added that you, too, didn't think properly – as though I thought these two things were on the same level. – This however I don't think. The deterioration of my thinking powers seems to me to be something *permanent*, as though it were due to physiological causes; the decline which I seem to observe in your thinking I believe to be a thing about which something can be done and to which, therefore, your attention should be drawn. This decline I seem to see I did not recognise as such until fairly recently. Its symptom is that you are unable now to stand decently *strong contradiction*, the contradiction of someone, I mean, who mistrusts your reasoning – which reasoning seems to me to be *very* often *muddled* and *superficial*. So, of course, everybody's thinking tends to be: but you used to take contradiction as a medicine; and by contradiction I don't mean the expression of polite disagreement but a *challenge*! You did not always take it graciously (but who would?) but you used not when contradicted to kick with forelegs and hindlegs like some animals. When first I noticed this kicking, which consists in talking EXTREMELY offensively, I could not interpret it rightly (and perhaps I don't now, but I *think* I do). One might object to this saying: "How can W. judge Sraffa's reaction to people contradicting him, as he has never seen Sraffa's reaction to anyone but himself?" – My answer is that, in my opinion, a man who can't stick a strenuous discussion with me, 1000 to 1, can't stick a strenuous discussion at all. I *don't* mean that I don't often have a very disagreable and tiresome way of talking, or that this isn't reprehensible, but that, in my experience, people who wanted to thrash out a question properly, put up with my more nasty qualities because they found me very useful.

It therefore is my opinion that it isn't simply these qualities which in a discussion with me exasperate you – to the point of making a *deep* discussion now impossible – but that the cause of this is, to put it bluntly, that you have in some way gone *soft*. – Why this should be so I don't know; but I have thought that it might perhaps be due to the fact that *many* more people admire you now than used to a few years ago: and when we talked about the bad effects which admiration had on Prof. Hardy I did not only think of myself as another example but also of *you*.

I may, of course, be ALL WRONG, and if I am – well, no harm is done by my having told you what I think. If I'm not, however, no harm is done either so it follows, logically, that no harm's done anyway.

I am with good feelings,

yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

kick with forelegs and hindlegs – A strong expression. Smythies recalled hearing Sraffa say, "I won't be bullied by you, Wittgenstein!" (communication from Frank Cioffi).

290. From the Minutes of the Moral Science Club, 31.1.1941

8th Meeting Jan. 31st, '41

John Wisdom: "We have the idea that . . ."

The eighth meeting was held in Mr. Moore's rooms in Trinity, with Dr. Ewing in the chair. Mr. Wisdom began by mentioning that at the last meeting Prof. Hardy had quoted a remark made by Mr. Malcolm in a paper in "Mind" of April 1940, to the effect that when we make necessary statements we do not describe facts; whereupon Prof. Wittgenstein had "sniffed". Mr. Wisdom explained what he thought Prof. Wittgenstein suspected Mr. Malcolm of having done in this article, but insisted that what not only Mr. Malcolm but he himself (Mr. Wisdom) had *written* was no more awful then what Prof. Wittgenstein had *said* on numerous occasions; and that none of it was awful, but first-rate, though sometimes unlucky. He went on to compare Mr. Malcolm's statement (which might be expressed, "We have the idea that necessary statements describe facts") with a statement made by Prof. Wittgenstein some time ago, at a meeting of the club, that "We have the idea that the meaning of a word is an object", (the implication being that these ideas are mistaken); and maintained that the two implied remarks, in common with *all* philosophical theories, had features inclining one to call them necessary truths, features inclining one to call them necessary falsehoods and features inclining one to call them meaningless statements. Finally he defended both and similar remarks – although open to criticism on the grounds that they are apt to mislead, unless accompanied by complementary talk which was not, on these occasions, forthcoming – as being useful and good recommendations as to the formulation of metaphysical questions and their answers (e.g. "Don't ask for the analysis of the proposition, S is P; ask for the description of the usage of the sentence, 'S is P' ").

A discussion followed.

Mr Moore's rooms – Timothy Moore, the son of the Professor, is meant.

a remark by Mr. Malcolm – In his article "Are Necessary Propositions Really Verbal?" in *Mind* 49 (April 1940), 189–203, Malcolm does indeed discuss the temptation mentioned but his own position is that "when we use necessary propositions in ordinary life we do not *use* them as *descriptive* statements".

291. To G. E. Moore, 7.3.1941

Trinity College
Cambridge
7.3.41

Dear Moore,

I had a letter from Malcolm the other day in which, among other things, he told me about a book which is being written about you and in which you too, so he says, are going to write an article. Forgive me, please, for saying that I read all this with a good deal of concern. I fear that you may now be walking at the edge of that cliff at the bottom of which I see lots of scientists and philosophers lying dead, Russell amongst others. My whole object in writing you was to say*: may a good spirit be with you* and keep you from getting dizzy and falling down.

I wish you'ld do me a favour. Take the poems of Conrad Ferdinand Meyer out of some library (he was a Swiss Poet in the last century) and read a poem "Die Vestalin". It's quite short. Please read it more than once. I hope you will like it and I hope it will tell you exactly what I want to say.

Please remember me to Mrs Moore. I wish you *lots* of good luck.

Yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

Moore was at this time Visiting Professor in Princeton.

a book – Clearly *The Philosophy of G. E. Moore*, in the Library of Living Philosophers edited by Paul Schilpp (Evanston and Chicago: Northwestern University, 1942). Moore himself was to contribute "Intellectual Autobiography" and "The Philosophy Replies" [to his critics].

"Die Vestalin" / "The Vestal" – See **292** where the true title is given. The poem is printed below followed by the editor's translation:

Auf das Feuer mit dem goldnen Strahle
Heftet sich in tiefer Mitternacht
Schlummerlos das Auge der Vestale,
Die der Göttin ewig Licht bewacht.

Wenn sie schlummerte, wenn sie entschliefe,
Wenn erstürbe die versäumte Glut,
Eingesargt in Gruft und Grabestiefe
Würde sie, wo Staub und Moder ruht.

Eine Flamme zittert mir im Busen,
Lodert warm zu jeder Zeit und Frist,
Die, entzündet durch den Hauch der Musen,
Ihnen ein beständig Opfer ist.

Und ich hüte sie mit heil'ger Scheue,
Daß sie brenne rein und ungekränkt;
Denn ich weiß, es wird der ungetreue
Wächter lebend in die Gruft versenkt.

English Translation

On the fire with its golden rays
In the deepest hours of the night
Unsleepingly the Vestal bends her gaze,
To guard the goddess's eternal light.

Should she slumber, should she drop to sleep,
Should the neglected embers fade and die,
In coffin-vault must she be buried deep,
Alone with dust and foul decay to lie.

Within my breast another flame does shine,
It leaps up warm at every tide and turn,
A standing offering at the Muses' shrine:
By their breath kindled, for them does it burn.

And close I tend it, with a holy dread,
Pure and unsullied seek its light to save,
Knowing, that, who this wardship has betrayed,
Will be sent down into a living grave.

292. To G. E. Moore, 17.6.1941

Trinity College
Cambridge
17.6.41

Dear Moore,

Thanks for your letter. Forgive if I have an entirely ungrounded fear. – I was a fool to give you a wrong title: the poem is called "Das heilige Feuer" and it begins with the words "Auf das Feuer . . .". I'm sorry I caused you unnecessary trouble in looking for it.

Tim, as you know, has come to my classes this year and, perhaps wrongly, I thought I saw an improvement in his thinking towards the end; he seemed to me to have become more lively and to get hold of the method – touch wood! (I'ld rather you kept this entirely to yourself.)

About 6 weeks ago I suddenly – for no reason I can imagine – began to be able to write again. Quite possibly this will only last for a very short time; but it feels good while it lasts and has made a great deal of difference to me.

My very best wishes!

Yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

"*Das heilige Feuer*" / "The Sacred Fire" – See **291** above.

Tim – Moore's son Timothy, who was an undergraduate at Cambridge at the time.

293. To N. Malcolm, 5.7.1941

Trinity College
Cambridge
5.7.41.

Dear Malcolm,

I got your letter dated May 17th yesterday. It's always good to hear from you! I am sorry – *honestly* – that you find you won't be able to teach at Princeton after next year. You know what my opinion of teaching philosophy is and I haven't changed it; but I'ld like you to quit for the *right* reasons, not for the wrong ones ("right" and "wrong" as *I* can see it). I know you'll make a good soldier; still, I hope you won't have to be one. I wish you could live quiet, in a sense, and be in a position to be kind and *understanding* to all sorts of human beings who *need* it! Because we all need this sort of thing very badly. The mags arrived a few weeks ago and I immediately thanked you for them. They were *really* grand! – Skinner sends his regards and Smythies will, when he hears from me. I wish I could dine with you before long! Lots of good wishes!

Affectionately
Ludwig Wittgenstein

The background to this letter is that Malcolm had written in the summer to Wittgenstein saying that while his post was not to be renewed after 1942, this did not matter since America by then would be in the war and he meant to join the forces. And so it turned out.

294. To the Vice-Chancellor (J. A. Venn), 14.10.1941

Trinity College
Cambridge
14.10.41.

Dear Mr Vice-Chancellor,

I have, after considering the matter for a long time, decided to take on some war-work, and I have accepted a job of "dispensary porter" at Guy's Hospital, London. I ought therefore, to leave Cambridge at the beginning of next week. Would you be so very kind as to grant me an interview some time this week. I should like to apply for leave of absence.

Yours sincerely,
L. Wittgenstein

J. A. Venn – President of Queens' College, Vice-Chancellor 1941–3.

Wittgenstein's motives in taking up such work at this point and not earlier can only be guessed. For his previous interest in para-medical work and his disapproval of the way the war was being waged, see **261** and **276**. He was probably more eager to do some war work now that the USSR had been attacked. The sudden death of Skinner (on 11 October), which for some days prostrated him, undoubtedly accounts for the precipitation with which he left Cambridge. The above letter to the Vice-Chancellor is dated the day of Skinner's funeral. But his decision (and indeed the arrangements which enabled him) to go had clearly been made earlier. Priestley's diary (see **185**) records a meeting in September, in Birmingham, where Priestley was now Vice-Chancellor:

> Wittgenstein came to supper on the Wednesday of this week. He is proposing to give up his work at Cambridge and go into National Service of some sort. I persuaded him not to resign but to content himself with asking for leave without stipend for the duration of the war. It would be a pity both from his own point of view and from that of Cambridge, if he went out altogether now. I tried to arrange for him to join the Friends Ambulance but unfortunately they cannot take him and I fear he may yet be jolted into resignation through failing to find a niche in the Services. He is not easy to fit in for in the last war he was an Austrian artillery officer and, as he has been so long out of it, does not feel that he would be capable either as an artillerist or as an officer. His present objective is the rank and file and some post in a medical unit.

Perhaps later in September Wittgenstein visited Professor John Ryle, who arranged for him to work as a dispensary porter at Guy's Hospital (see Ray Monk, *Ludwig Wittgenstein: The Duty of Genius* (London: Vintage, 1991), pp. 431–2). R. Thouless in his diaries (shown to the present editor) says Wittgenstein told him he was refused by the Royal Army Medical Corps, as being of former enemy alien nationality.

295. From L. Goodstein, 20.10.1941

Denmark House
Southcote Rd,
Reading
26–10–41

Dear Dr Wittgenstein,

Very many thanks for your letters. Three parcels of Francis' papers reached me on the 22nd. I am very grateful to you for sending them to me, as I very much wanted to have them. I have so far sorted out two of the parcels. These consist of

(1) Work done at School

(2) University lecture notes and worked examples

(3) One volume of rough notes on your lectures taken by Francis himself and a fair copy of these notes, dated Michaelmas 1934.

I need not tell you how beautifully neat, careful and thorough all the work is – a true piece of Francis himself.

I suppose the dictated notes to which you refer are in the third parcel.

If I find anything of Francis work sufficiently complete for publication, I shall get in touch with you about it.

What Francis' family perhaps don't realise is that his chief work was his *life* and now that we have lost him the most precious thing that is left is the *memory* of that life, not something that can be dressed in words for a philosophical article. You say that they don't seem to realise what it is they have lost, but perhaps it is that *they* lost him already years ago. If I do hear from his Family, which I think very unlikely, though of course I wrote to them, I shall try to explain to them that what they are attempting is the very last thing Francis would have wished.

I shall let you know the next time I am going to London in the hope that we shall be able to meet.

Ever yours
Louis Goodstein

Louis Goodstein – (1912–85) a mathematician who attended Wittgenstein's lectures and professed considerable debts to them. He was (as can be here seen) a loyal friend of Skinner's. The papers referred to were kept at the University of Leicester where he was Professor of Mathematics but are on loan in Trinity College Library, where Professor Arthur Gibson is working on them.

Skinner's family viewed the part played in his life by Wittggenstein and even by Goodstein with deep misgiving and it is true that Skinner did not bring to fruition his mathematical abilities, which competent judges thought considerable, but Goodstein and other friends respected and in a measure understood his choice of life. It is hard not to think that his very fragile health contributed to making it the best choice for him.

296. To P. Sraffa, [4.11.]1941

Tuesday
Nuffield House
Guy's Hospital
London S.E.1.

Dear Sraffa,

I have, so far, been very lucky here. The work is just what I wanted. I believe I am doing it quite well. I work from about 8.30 to about 4.30 or 5 and feel *extremely* tired when it's over. The chap (20 years old) who's in charge of me and shows me what to do I find an excellent teacher; we work well together and without any friction. My work, apart from carrying medicines and bandages etc around, consists in mixing ointments and the like. When the day's work is done I have practically no strength left at all to *think* about anything. If my health will stick it and I get a little stronger bodily this *may* change. My quarters are with the doctors (address above), my room's comfortable, but only moderately quiet. – Ryle is very nice to me. The other doctors I've seen so far seem stiff and unattractive. All the working people I met, I liked.

The one serious and *bad* business is that I have bad nights. In spite (or perhaps because) of my great tiredness I sleep badly and that has an accumulative bad effect, and I have to take phanodorm, which I hate.

You once said I should write if I wanted you to send me anything. I'm now making use of this offer. Please go to Coulson, the chemist, and buy a tin of Sedin (if possible a large one) for me (it's 6/6). He probably has reserved one for me so please tell him it's for me. I'll settle with you when I come to Cambridge.

Give your mother all my very best wishes. If I come to Cambridge in the weekend after next I'll try to see you.

Ludwig Wittgenstein

Dated by a subsequent letter of Wittgenstein's about arrangements to meet.

the chap who's in charge of me – Roy Fouracre (see **304** below).

Ryle – John Ryle (1889–1950), at one time Professor of Physic (i.e. Medicine) at Cambridge, later of Social Medicine at Oxford. At this point he was directing the Emergency Medical Service (for air attacks principally) in the Borough (Southwark), housed (precisely) in Guy's Hospital.

phanodorm . . . Sedin – Sleeping pills still available.

297. From the Minutes of the Moral Science Faculty Board, 12.11.1941

At Professor Broad's proposal it was unanimously decided to send a resolution to Professor Wittgenstein expressing their [the members'] sense of loss at his absence and looking forward to his safe return.

It is perhaps not unfair to regard this as an example of the "kid-glove" handling which Broad thought Wittgenstein required.

1942

298. To J. T. Saunders (Assistant Registrary), 30.1.1942

Nuffield House
Guy's Hospital
London S.E.1.
30.1.42.

Dear Saunders,

Thank you for your letter, dated Jan. 16th. I was glad to hear the decision of the General Board. I will let you know my travelling expenses at the end of next Term.

Yours sincerely,
L. Wittgenstein

From Cambridge University Personnel File:

G.B. Notes 14 Jan 1942
4. (e) Professor Wittgenstein
(See Minute 4(f) of 15 October 1941.)
From Dr. Broad:
17 December 1941
Professor Wittgenstein

I am writing as Chairman of the Faculty Board of Moral Science to ask you to bring the following matter to the attention of the General Board at the earliest opportunity.

Wittgenstein was asked by some of his pupils to come to Cambridge at week-ends in full term and to give his usual lecture or conversation-class to them on the Saturdays. He tried the experiment twice at the end of the Michaelmas Term, and found that he could manage the work to the satisfaction of himself and the class. He has therefore decided to give one lecture a week in his rooms during the Lent Term, and, if all goes well, during the Easter Term also. The College has made such arrangements that Wittgenstein will be able to have the use of his rooms at the week-ends.

I understand that Wittgenstein is at present receiving no part of his salary as Professor. If so, it would appear that the position ought to be reviewed in the light of the fact that he will be doing an appreciable proportion of his usual lecturing work, and that he will be incurring travelling expenses in order to carry on with it.

I am writing this letter with the knowledge and consent of Wittgenstein.

P.S. What Wittgenstein actually says, in the letter which he wrote to me when I raised this question with him, is as follows: "As to your last suggestion – I shouldn't mind in the least having my travelling expenses paid for me. So, if you think this fair, I should be grateful if you would bring the matter up".

See also notes to **294**.

299. From the Minutes of the Moral Science Faculty Board, 22.4.1942

A letter was received saying that Professor Wittgenstein would be unable to lecture this term [Easter Term 1942] owing to bad health.

A vote was taken on electors to the Knightbridge Chair. H. H. Price 4, L. Wittgenstein 3.

Present and voting: Broad, Boys Smith, Thouless, Mace, Braithwaite, Wisdom, Ewing.

bad health – Wittgestein had to be operated on for gall-stones. This required a technical change in the motivation of his leave of absence. During sick-leave his normal stipend would be paid.

Knightbridge Chair – That in Moral Philosophy held by Broad, which in fact fell vacant after Wittgenstein's death.

H. H. Price – (1899–1984) Wykeham Professor of Logic in the University of Oxford

Boys Smith, Mace – J. S. Boys-Smith, a theologian, and C. A. Mace, a psychologist, members of the Faculty Board.

Thouless – Robert Thouless (1894–1984) Educational Psychologist at Trinity, author of *Straight Thinking in Wartime* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1942). Wittgenstein often went for a walk with him on his wartime visits to Cambridge and named him as an executor of his will (subsequently altered).

300. To P. Sraffa, [20.5.1942]

Nuffield House
Guy's Hospital
S.E.1.
Wednesday

Dear Sraffa,

Please drop the enclosed letter into Dr. Nourse's letterbox. It's an important letter and I don't know his house-number, or his initials. I am out of bed a great part of the day now but *frightfully* weak and still having some trouble with my head and back, which makes me feel pretty wretched. I am back again in my room in Nuffield House. I'll have to stay here probably for at least a week before I'm strong enough to travel, climb stairs, etc. Give my best wishes to your mother.

So long!

Ludwig Wittgenstein

Dating: Wittgenstein recovered from his operation and returned to Nuffield House on 16 May: this is the Wednesday following (information from pocket diary).

Dr Nourse – a Cambridge physician, chosen by Wittgenstein and Sraffa when Adrian recommended finding a local practitioner to look after diabetes. Nourse was preferred over Bevan (**417**, etc. below), neither then being known to Wittgenstein. Letter **290** above refers to and is part of an elliptical exchange between Wittgenstein and Sraffa from which all this can be inferred. It does not seem that Wittgenstein in fact had diabetes.

301. To J. T. Saunders (Assistant Registrary), 24.5.1942

Nuffield House
Guy's Hospital
S.E.1.
24.5.42.

Dear Saunders,

Thank you very much for your letter, dated April 24th, which I received just before my operation. I am very grateful to the General Board for their generous decision. I am well on the way to recover and expect to be able to take up my work at the hospital again in 5 or 6 weeks.

Please forgive my not writing sooner.

Yours sincerely,
L. Wittgenstein

their generous decision – No doubt the decision to pay him his regular stipend during this period of illness.

302. To J. T. Saunders (Assistant Registrary), 21.7.1942

Nuffield House
Guy's Hospital, S.E.1.
21.7.42.

Dear Saunders,

I have now completely recovered from my illness and returned to my work at Guy's Hospital. I'm afraid I don't know whether I should have again applied for leave of absence. Would you be kind enough to let me know what steps, if any, I ought to take?

Yours sincerely,
L. Wittgenstein

303. To W. J. Sartain (First Assistant Registrary), 23.7.1942

Guy's Hospital
S.E.1.
23.7.42.

Dear Sartain,

Thank you very much for your letter dated July 22nd. I resumed my work at Guy's on July 9th.

Yours sincerely,
L. Wittgenstein

304. To R. Rhees, 4.11.1942

Nuffield House
Guy's Hospital S.E.1.
4.11.42.

Dear Rhees,

I promised you to write how my classes were going. The first two were pretty rotten, especially the first: The third and fourth (that's as far as I've got) went fairly well. I'm talking about the foundations of math. Thouless is coming and that's a good thing. Apart from him there is, maybe, *one* whom I like to lecture to. There are about 10 altogether. My work here is unchanged. Roy, my mate, is still here and I'm getting on well with him, and as long as he'll be here I think I'll stick it. – My lectures will probably go on moderately well as long as I am able – as now – to do a little work on the subject. I'm quite certain this won't be for very long.

I'm afraid I've no more time now to read any Latin, – not that that worries me.

I had a letter from Drury recently from Egypt. He seems to be well and interested in his work. – Give my best wishes to Mrs Rhees. I hope to hear from you before long.

Good wishes!
Ludwig Wittgenstein

Roy – Roy Fouracre, a laboratory assistant who worked alongside Wittgenstein at Guy's Hospital. Wittgenstein found him a calming influence (a typical saying was "Steady Prof.!", when Wittgenstein was agitated). Wittgenstein susequently kept up a friendship and correspondence with him.

305. To N. Malcolm, 24.11.1942

Nuffield House
Guy's Hospital
London S.E.1.
24.11.42

Dear Malcolm,

I was *glad* to get your letter, dated Oct. 30. I enclose a foul copy of a very wonderful German novel. I couldn't get a decent copy – at least I had no time to look for a better one. German books, as you can imagine, are very difficult to get these days. You may find it rather difficult to read, and, of course, you mayn't like it; but I hope you will. It's a sort of a Christmas present and I hope you won't mind it being so dirty. The advantage of this is that you can read it down in the engine-room without making it *more* dirty. If you find you like it I'll try to get you the book of which this is only one story. There are five of them called: "Züricher Novellen", because they're all in some way connected with Zürich: Keller was a Swiss, and one of the greatest German prose writers. – As I told you in my last letter I haven't heard from Smythies for ages and have an idea that he has stopped being interested in me. But perhaps it isn't so. – Wisdom is still in Cambridge. I never see him. – Let me hear from you again. Bless you!! Affectionately

Ludwig Wittgenstein

a German novel – *Hadlaub*, one of Keller's *Züricher Novellen* (not novels in the English sense but long short stories, each on a single theme) (Malcolm, *Ludwig Wittgenstein: A Memoir*, p. 38).

haven't heard from Smythies – See **284** above for a similar estrangement: this one too was overcome.

1943

306. To R. Rhees, 1.4.1943

Nuffield House
Guy's Hospital
S.E.1.
1.4.34.

Dear Rhees,

There is a possibility of my coming to Swansea on April 13th or 14th and staying until April 19th or 20th. Supposing I could come, would it suit you? Could I stay somewhere near you, and would you like to have discussions with me? If, for whatever reason, my visit doesn't suit you just now, please don't for a moment hesitate to say so. I'ld only come – if I can – if it happens to be the right thing for you, too, and if it's all right with Mrs Rhees. Please let me know *as soon as you can* which way it is, so I can make my arrangements accordingly. I won't write anymore just now. I hope you're in moderately good health and in not too bad spirits. Let me hear from you soon!

Yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

1.4.34 – A curious miswriting. The postmark on the envelope confirms the obvious correction.

307. To J. T. Saunders (Assistant Registrary), 4.5.1943

Temporary address:
Royal Victoria Infirmary,
Newcastle-upon-Tyne.
May 4th, 1943.

Dear Saunders,

Thank you for your letter, dated 1st May. My official title is: Laboratory Assistant to the Medical Research Council's Clinical Research Unit. My wages are £4 per week.

Yours sincerely,
L. Wittgenstein

J. T. Saunders Esq., M.A.,
University Registry,
Cambridge.

Written on stationery of Medical Research Council and Guy's Hospital.

308. To N. Malcolm, 11/19.9.1943

Clinical Research Lab.
Royal Victoria Infirmary
Newcastle on Tyne
11.9.43.

Dear Malcolm,

I haven't written to you for a long time and haven't heard from you for ages.

19.9.43. These lines I wrote a week ago and then was interrupted. The next day your letter arrived. I was very glad to hear from you. It would be ever so good to see you again. I too regret that for external and internal reasons I can't do philosophy, for that's the only work that's given me real satisfaction. No other work really bucks me up. I'm extremely busy now and my mind is kept occupied the whole time but at the end of the day I just feel tired and sad. – Well, *perhaps* better times will come again. – I haven't heard from Smythies for *many* months. I know he is in Oxford but he doesn't write to me. – Lewy is still at Cambridge, which, I'm sure, is very bad for him and not good for anyone else. Rhees is still lecturing at Swansea and as good as ever. I very rarely come to Cambridge now, about once every three months. I've given up my rooms in College. I'm supposed, of course, to come back there as a professor after the war, but I must say I can't quite imagine how I'll be able to do it. I wonder if I'll ever be able to teach philosophy again regularly. I rather think I shan't be able.

I hope you'll see Moore and find him in good health. I hear the book about him has appeared – but I shan't read it. –

Write to me again before long! *Good luck!*

Affectionately
Ludwig Wittgenstein

the book about him – See **291**.

309. To N. Malcolm, 7.12.1943

Clinical Research Lab.
Royal Victoria Infirmary
Newcastle
7.12.43

Dear Malcolm,

I haven't heard from you for ages. I'm still at my old work but may possibly leave here soon as my boss is going into the army and the whole research unit may brake up, or get another boss. I am feeling rather lonely here and may try to get to some place where I have someone to talk to. E.g. to Swansea where Rhees is a lecturer in philosophy. I don't know if you remember Rhees. You saw him in my lectures, I believe. He was a pupil of Moore's and is an excellent man and has a real talent for philosophy, too. I haven't seen Smythies for ages, nor heard from him, but someone told me that he has a job at Oxford. (Not at the University.).

I'm in good health but often depressed. – If you feel like writing to me I'ld like to hear from you; but if you don't feel like writing – don't.

Good luck!

Affectionately
Ludwig Wittgenstein

my boss is going into the Army – Dr R. T. Grant was to be succeeded by Dr E. Bywaters. See notes on **310** below.

1944

310. From R. Rhees, 30.1.1944

96, Bryn Road,
Swansea.
January 30th, 1944.

Dear Wittgenstein,

I ought to have written long ago about my conversation with Heath concerning possible publishers. He was less sympathetic than I had hoped he would be, and I suppose this made me reluctant to write. Perhaps I hoped vaguely that he would have more encouraging ideas a little later. But nothing has come out of it at all, I am sorry to say.

I hope you may have had better results from your conversation with the people at the Cambridge Press.

From the remarks in your note to Jean I gathered that the first beginnings of your resumed work at Newcastle were not going too happily. I wonder if that has changed at all. I suppose you will have completed the report on your experiments; and I am curious to know how that impressed your new chief. I hope it may have made him want to put you on to some sort of experimental work again.

I know I needn't remind you that we'd be glad to make what inquiries we can hereabouts if you should feel you'd like to try it here. And I needn't say how much I'd like it if you came.

On the other hand you said that if your book were accepted you might move to Cambridge again. I can't help wondering if there might not be a good many advantages in that, even apart from publication. But perhaps that is because my imagination is dead.

I keep remembering your visit here at Christmas time, and I'm constantly grateful to you for coming. I'm hoping vaguely already that I may be able to see you, at least for a day, at Easter time.

Anyway, I hope you'll find some work and surroundings that are tolerably congenial; soon, if you haven't now.

R. Rhees

Heath – Rhees's professor (see **288** above).

possible publishers – Heath had published text-books with Longmans, Methuen, and Watts. Another publisher that may have been considered by Wittgenstein was Michael Joseph (their address is in his 1938–9 diary). In the mean time Cambridge University Press had accepted his book. This seems to have been for the second time, since they had already done so in 1938, but perhaps they now agreed to print the *Tractatus* alongside it: see note to **205** above and the letter from Dr R. T. Grant quoted in the next note but one.

Jean – Rhees's wife.

your resumed work at Newcastle – Wittgenstein went to Newcastle on 29 April 1943 but the reference here ("first beginnings") may be to some change in his employment there, for which, and for his whole time there, see Leo Kinlen, "Wittgenstein in Newcastle", *Northern Review* 13 (2003–4), 1–30. Wittgenstein

devised an apparatus for measuring variations in blood pressure; he also did histological work, and proposed a simple method for measuring wounds and possible blood loss. Any of these may have resulted in a written report and publication on the last named was considered. He seems to have been less happy at Newcastle than during his previous work with the same group in London. A new director (Dr Eric Bywaters) took over in January 1944. He was impressed by Wittgenstein's work but saw little of him, since Wittgenstein soon left, ostensibly to complete the book commissioned by "Cambridge". This motivation is presupposed in Dr Grant's letter of 16 February 1944 ("I am glad to hear that your book has been accepted in the form you wish – you will probably find it will take longer to do your MS, than you think. Bywaters had already told me of your plans"), but **309** above shows that Wittgenstein also had other motives for leaving.

311. To R. Rhees, 9.2.1944

Clin. Research Lab.
R.V.I. Newcastle
9.2.44

Dear Rhees,

Thanks so much for your letter and wire. I intend to go to Cambridge about the middle of next week and I should like to leave there as soon as possible. There may possibly be one catch. You know I'm on leave of absence here and it has been granted me because I am doing "important" war work. If, e.g., I leave here and try to find another job, say in a hospital, I have to let the General Board know and they have to approve the new job. Now if I come to Cambridge next week they'll want to know what I'm doing and I'll have to tell them that I want to do some philosophy for a couple of months. And in this case they can say: if you want to do philosophy you're not doing a war job and have to do your philosophy in Cambridge. I'm awfully sorry that I haven't thought of this before. It only dawned upon me today. Not for any particular reason. I just thought of it. A few days ago I wrote to Broad asking if I could stay in College for a few days and telling him the reason. I've not yet had a reply and, perhaps, when I get it he'll write something about this business. I imagine I could say I need a rest and take a two months holiday. I just don't know what the University does in such a case and shall have to see next week. I'm almost shure that I *couldn't* work at Cambridge now! I HOPE I'll be able to come to Swansea. – Drury is in Swansea now and perhaps you've already seen him. Thanks again for your great kindness!

So long!
Ludwig Wittgenstein

312. To J. T. Saunders (Assistant Registrary), 7.3.1944

c/o Rhees
96 Bryn Rd. Swansea
7.3.44

Dear Saunders,

Thank you very much for your letter, dated March 2nd. Please forgive me for replying so late: I was for a few days unable to decide what to write to you. I greatly appreciate the kindness and generosity of the General Board in offering to pay me a Term's salary, but I must tell you that I would very much rather not be paid for the work I am doing now. For it isn't at all clear that the work will not prove to be a wash-out. On the other hand it is of the greatest importance for me that it should be as good as I can make it; and the thought – which I coudn't get rid of – that I'd have, as it were, to live up to a salary would disturb me and therefore make conditions slightly less favourable.

So, please, just give me leave, without pay. (My health, by the way, is as good as possible.) I hope you don't think I'm ungrateful, for I'm not.

Yours sincerely,
L. Wittgenstein

Cambridge University Archives, Personnel Files, Office memorandum

Prof. Wittgenstein
left N'castle two days ago.
want to spend 2 or 3 months not in Cambridge in the preparation of a book.
when book is ready for press will go back to war-work and wd[not] come to Cambridge.
will stay in Swansea
c/o Rhees
96 Bryn Road
Swansea

Cambridge University Archives, Personnel Files:

G.B. Notes 15 Mar 1944
2. *Leave of absence.*
Professor Wittgenstein.
(see Minute 3(a) of 8 March 1944.)
a letter from Professor Wittgenstein will be read at the meeting.

Cambridge University Archives, Personnel Files:

G.B. Min 15 Mar 1944
2. *Leave of absence*
Professor Wittgenstein. (see Minute 3(a) of 8 March 1944.)
On a letter, dated 7 March 1944, from Professor Wittgenstein, it was noted that there were no reasons for his being dispensed on medical grounds from discharging his University duties from 16 February, when he left his employment at the Royal Victoria Infirmary, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, until the end of this term. It was agreed that his absence from Cambridge during

the latter half of this term should be condoned, and that he should be dispensed under Statute D, XXII, 5, without loss of stipend, from discharging his duties as Professor during the Easter Term, 1944.

Registry notes show that attempts were made to induce Wittgenstein to apply for a sort of sick leave (which would have been much easier administratively) but without success.

313. To J. T. Saunders (Assistant Registrary), 23.3.1944

c/o Mrs Mann
10 Langland Rd
Mumbles Swansea
23.3.44

Dear Saunders,

Thank you for your letter, dated 18 March. I am grateful to the General Board for condoning my absence from Cambridge this term and for dispensing me from discharging my duties at the University next week.

Yours sincerely,
L. Wittgenstein

314. To Y. Smythies, 7.4.[1944]

c/o Mrs Mann
10 Langland Rd
Mumbles Swansea
7.4.

Dear Smythies,

Thanks for your letter, dated Thursday. The news of your joining the roman catholic church was indeed unexpected. But whether it's good, or bad news – how should I know? The following seems clear to me. Deciding to become a christian is like deciding to give up walking on the ground and do tight-rope walking instead, where nothing is more easy than to slip and every slip can be fatal. Now if a friend of mine were to take up tight-rope walking and told me that in order to do it he thinks he has to wear a particular kind of garment I should say to him: If you're serious about that tight-rope walking I'm certainly not the man to tell you what outfit to wear, or not to wear, as I've never tried to walk anywhere else than on the ground. Further: your decision to wear that kind of garment is, in a way, terrible, however I look at it. For if it means that you're serious about the thing it's terrible, even though it may be the best and greatest thing you can do. And if you're dressing up and then don't do the tight-rope act its terrible in a different way. There's one thing, however, I want to warn you against. There are certain devices (weights attached in a particular way to the body) which steady you on the rope and make your act easy, and in fact no more dangerous than walking on the ground. This sort of device should not be part of your outfit. – All this comes to saying: I cannot applaud your decision to go in for rope walking, because, having always stayed on the ground myself, I have no right to encourage another man in such an enterprise. If, however, I am asked whether I'ld rather you went in for rope walking, or for sham[m]ing, I'll certainly say: rather anything than the latter. – I *hope* you'll never despair, and I also hope that you'll always remain capable of despairing.

I sent you a letter yesterday saying why I'ld rather not see you at the present moment. I should like to see you when my work here is done, or almost done.

I'm really interested in what sort of a *man* you are and will be. *This* will, for me, be the eating of the pudding.

So long! Good wishes!

Affectionately
Ludwig Wittgenstein

In *Ludwig Wittgenstein: Personal Recollections*, ed. Rhees, Drury writes, "Wittgenstein told me that one of his pupils had written to him to say that he had become a Roman Catholic and that he (Wittgenstein) was partly responsible for this conversion because it was he that had advised the reading of Kierkegaard" (p. 103). Wittgenstein then quoted from the above answer.

315. To J. T. Saunders (Assistant Registrary), 16.9.1944

c/o Rhees
96 Bryn Rd
Swansea
16.9.44

Dear Saunders,

Under the present circumstances it does not seem to make sense for me to take up war work again at the beginning of October. I shall, therefore, return to Cambridge instead, and resume my duties there at the beginning of Michaelmas Term.

Yours sincerely
L. Wittgenstein

316. To G. E. Moore, [October 1944]

Trinity Coll.
Friday

Dear Moore,

I should like to tell you how glad I am that you read us a paper yesterday. It seems to me that the most important point was the "absurdity" of the assertion "There is a fire in this room and I don't believe there is." To call this, as I think you did, "an absurdity for *psychological* reasons" seems to me to be wrong, or *highly* misleading. (If I ask someone "Is there a fire in the next room?" and he answers "I believe there is" I can't say: "Don't be irrelevant. I asked you about the fire, not about your state of mind!") But what I wanted to say was this. Pointing out that "absurdity" which is in fact something *similar* to a contradiction, though it isn't one, is so important that *I hope you'll publish* your paper. By the way, don't be shocked at my saying it's something "similar" to a contradiction. This means roughly: it plays a similar role in logic. You have said something about the *logic* of assertion. Viz: It makes sense to say "Let's suppose: p is the case and I don't believe that p is the case", whereas it makes no sense to assert "p is the case and I don't believe that p is the case". This *assertion* has to be ruled out and *is* ruled out by "common sense", just as a contradiction is. And this just shows that logic isn't as simple as logicians think it is. In particular: that contradiction isn't the *unique* thing people think it is. It isn't the *only* logically inadmissible form and it is, under certain circumstances, admissible. And to show this seems to me the chief merit of your paper. In a word it seems to me that you've made a *discovery*, and that you should publish it.

I hope to see you privately some day.

Yours sincerely
L. Wittgenstein

Dated by Moore.

The paper was called "Certainty" and read at the meeting of the Moral Science Club on 26 October. The paper was not identical with the one with the same title in *Philosophical Papers* (London and New York: Allen & Unwin, 1959), since the nearest that paper comes to the point that Wittgenstein praises is to say (p. 238):

> "I feel certain that p" does not entail that p is true (although by saying that I feel certain that p, I do imply that p is true).

However, in the manuscript from which the publication is taken, which was originally written in ink, evidently in 1941 for delivery as the Howison Lecture in the University of California, there are a number of alternative words, phrases, and whole pages in pencil, partly designed to accommodate a different form of delivery. Thus the ink has Moore "standing" (a lecture) while the pencil tolerates "sitting". Everything indicates that it was the version emended in pencil that Moore read to the Club in 1944; and there on pp. 16–17 he says:

> "It is certain that p but I don't know that p" is certainly not self-contradictory, though it is a perfectly absurd thing to say of myself. The reason why it is absurd for me to say it of myself is the same as the reason why it would be absurd to say "Dogs bark but I don't know that they do" or

> "Dogs bark but I don't believe that they do". What is asserted by saying these two things is something which might well be true: there is no contradiction in it. But it would be quite absurd for anyone to say either of them, because though what he would be asserting would be something which might quite well be true, yet by asserting that dogs bark, he implies, though he does not assert and though it does not follow from what he does assert, in the one case that he knows that dogs bark and in the other that he doesn't believe they don't.

An earlier, incomplete draft of the lecture (on American paper and so presumably also from 1941) contains a fairly long discussion of the difference between "I know for certain that p", which is certainly contradicted by "not-p", and "I feel certain that p", which is not contradicted by "not-p", but certainly can't be said alongside "not-p".

That Moore published the original (ink-written) version only, if it requires explanation, may be attributed to the implicit obligation he was under to publish the actual Howison Lecture, unless indeed it is due to the unresolved dispute over the present problem. In Moore's *Selected Writings* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), pp. 171–96, the editor Thomas Baldwin has published much of the 1944 version – its new conclusion, for example – but not the details relevant to us.

The change of example indicated by Wittgenstein's letter (from "Dogs bark", as in the pencilled version, to "There is a fire in this room" – of greater actuality perhaps in a college context) and the suggestion that the absurdity was such for psychological reasons (of which there is no trace in this particular paper) may have been generated by the occasion and the discussion (but see the end of this note).

The paradox itself (in one form or another) was much discussed in *Analysis* before the war ("this old problem", Austin with slight exaggeration called it in 1940). Moore's first reference to it in print is in his own Schilpp volume (*The Philosophy of G. E. Moore*, ed. P. Schilpp (Evanston and Chicago: Northwestern University, 1942)) (see notes to **291**) as part of a (very effective) reply to C. L. Stevenson, but Margaret Macdonald reported in 1937 ("Induction and Hypothesis", *Aristotelian Society*, supplementary vol. 17 (1937), 30) that Moore had pointed out in lectures that "you cannot say without absurdity . . . 'He has toothache but I'm not sure whether he has'." There have been many discussions of the problem and its history: for recent ones see Joachim Schulte, *Experience and Expression* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), pp. 135ff., and Jane Heal, "Moore's Paradox: A Wittgensteinian Approach", *Mind* 103 (January 1994), 5–24.

Wittgenstein opened a discussion on "Moore's Paradox" in the Moral Science Club on 25 October 1945 and Moore a further one entitled "P but I do not believe P" on 29 November of the same year. The minutes of the former meeting are printed below (see **339**), in the notes to which a suggestion is made about the supposed psychological nature of the absurdity.

I hope to see you privately some day – The familiar intercourse of the two men had been interrupted (though it was now to be resumed) by Moore's absence in America followed by Wittgenstein's war work and his eight months' stay at Swansea, which had just ended when this letter was written.

317. To R. Rhees, 17.10.[1944]

Trinity Coll.
17.10.

Dear Rhees,

Thanks for your note and the enclosure. I've *often* thought of you but its difficult for me to write a letter just now. I've seen Russell and Moore. Russell somehow gave me a *bad* impression. Moore is as nice as always. I gave him your good wishes etc. I couldn't see him for long as we were interrupted by Mrs Moore. She told me later that Moore wasn't really as well as he seemed and that he mustn't have long conversations. I have good reason for believing that this, on the whole, is boloney. Moore has had queer black-outs at times but then he's an oldish man. For his age he is obviously fit. Mrs Moore, however, doesn't like the idea of his seeing *me*. Perhaps she's afraid that I might criticize the book which was written about him and, generally, have a bad effect on his morale. –

My class is exceedingly poor. I have so far 6 people, none of whom is really good. Lewy and Thouless are coming. Yesterday I gave my first lecture – and you were right: I didn't take James as my text but just talked out of my own head (or through my own hat). I have hope to get a typist soon, but no hope whatever to finish my book in the near future. I needn't tell you that I am sincerely glad that I could spend such a long time in Swansea with you. I wish I could have been of greater use to you than I was. Thinking is sometimes easy, often difficult but at the same time thrilling. But when it's most important it's just disagreable, that is when it threatens to robb one of ones pet notions and to leave one all bewildered and with a feeling of worthlessness. In these cases I and others shrink from thinking or can only get ourselves to think after a long sort of struggle. I believe that you too know this situation and I wish you *lots of courage*! though I haven't got it myself. We are all *sick* people.

On this cheerful note I shall close my letter. May I see you again before very long! It is true that the blind can't lead the blind; but two blind men have 4 feet between them and can therefore stabilize each other a bit. Give my wishes and thanks to Mrs Rhees.

So long!
Ludwig Wittgenstein

James – William James's *Principles of Psychology* will have been meant.

Russell – Russell had just been re-elected to a Fellowship at Trinity. Like Moore he had recently returned from the United States.

318. From R. Rhees, 29.10.1944

96, Bryn Road,
Swansea.
October 29th, 1944.

Dear Wittgenstein,

I'm pretty late in answering your letter. I don't think this delay has any relation to the impression your letter made on me. Anyway my thoughts have gone back I think every day to your remarks about the struggle that is needed to get oneself to think. And your wish that I might find "lots of courage" has been a comfort, even though it hasn't been enough to put me on the road. I agree, I think, that it is just when it is disagreeable that thinking is most important, though I hadn't thought of that before. I've been faint hearted enough, especially in recent years. And now I don't know if it isn't more laziness than funk that keeps me just messing about. It may be too that you have to lead the sort of life that doesn't make you disgusted with yourself if you're going to get on with thinking. But here I'm not sure which depends on what.

[. . .]

I must stop this now. I'll send it along because I've nothing better, and because I did want to write you. You said that you had prospects of getting a typist soon. I hope you have one. And I hope more than I can say that you may bring your work near to publication. I don't know what the obstacles are you referred to. I wish I knew a way to be of some help.

Rhees

319. To G. E. Moore, [November 1944]

Trin. Coll.
Monday.

Dear Moore,

I was sorry to hear in the Moral Sc. Club on Saturday that you were resigning your Chairmanship. It wasn't really necessary to resign it as I could always have deputized for you whenever you didn't feel inclined or able to come. – I was, as you can imagine, elected chairman after your letter had been read to the Club. I *hope* this doesn't mean that you aren't going to come to the meetings when your health will again permit it (and some moderately interesting person reads a paper). I should very much like to see you before long if it's all right with you.

Yours

L. Wittgenstein

Dated by Moore.

Moore had been Chairman (a distinct office from that of President) since 1912, when indeed Wittgenstein had proposed him for the post (see McGuinness, *Young Ludwig*, p. 143). For Wittgenstein's own fluctuating relations with the Club, see **199** above: he had, however, resumed attending its meetings from at latest February 1939 and, after taking up his Professorship, quite often took the chair, no doubt usually in Moore's absence, but also, naturally enough when Moore was speaking (see notes on **316**). Wittgenstein was twice (in 1941 and 1943) elected Chairman for the ensuing year. There seems to have been a certain fluidity in all the Club's formal arrangements, as is not unusual with such societies.

320. To N. Malcolm, 16.11.1944

Trinity College
Cambridge
16.11.44.

My dear Malcolm,

Thanks for your letter, dated Nov. 12th which arrived this morning. I was glad to get it. I thought you had almost forg[otten] me, or perhaps wished to forget me. I had a particular reason for thinking this. Whenever I thought of you I couldn't help thinking of a particular incident which seemed to me very important. You and I were walking along the river towards the railway bridge and we had a heated discussion in which you made a remark about "national character" that shocked me by it's primitiveness. I then thought: what is the use of studying philosophy if all that it does for you is to enable you to talk with some plausibility about some abstruse questions of logic etc., and if it does not impr[ove] your thinking about the important questions of everyday life, if it does not make you more conscientious than any . . . journalist in the use of the *dangerous* phrases such people use for there own ends. You see, I know that it's difficult to think *well* about "certainty", "probability", "perception", etc. But it is, if possible, still more difficult to think, or *try* to think, really honestly about your life and other peoples lives. And the trouble is that thinking about these things is *not thrilling*, but often downright nasty. And when it's nasty then it's *most* important. – Let me stop preaching. What I wanted to say was this: I'ld *very* much like to see you again; but if we meet it would be wrong to avoid talking about serious non-philosophical things. Being timid I don't like clashes, and particularly not with people I like. But I'ld rather have a clash than mere superficial talk. – Well, I thought that when you gradually ceased writing to me it was because you felt that if we were to dig down deep enough we wouldn't be able to see eye to eye in very serious matters. *Perhaps I was quite wrong.* But anyway, if we live to see each other again let's not shirk digging. You can't think decently if you don't want to hurt yourself. I know all about it because I am a shirker.

I haven't seen Smythies for a *long* time, but shall see him in about 2 weeks when he'll come up from Oxford (where he has a job, not connected with the University) to read a paper to the Moral Science Club. – Read this letter in a good spirit! *Good luck!*

Affectionately
Ludwig Wittgenstein

For Malcolm's reply to this letter, see notes to **325**.

321. To R. Rhees, 28.11.1944

Trinity Coll.
Cambridge
Tuesday 28.11.44.

Dear Rhees,

Thanks for your letter, dated Nov. 25th. I'm *sorry* to hear about the depressing circumstances under which you are working. Please don't give in, or despair! I know how immensely depressing things can look; and, of course, I'm the first man to think of running away, but I hope you'll pull yourself together. I wonder what lines for a logic course I recommended. Anyhow, there's nothing more difficult than to teach logic with *any* success when your students are all half asleep. (I've heard Braithwaite *snore* in my lectures.) Please go the *bloody rough* way! – I wish you one moderately intelligent and awake pupil to sweeten your labour! Please look after your health. You can't expect good work when your health isn't really good, and colds are nasty things. I've so far been in good health, and consequently my classes haven't gone too bad. (Or should I say "badly"?) Thouless is coming to them, and a woman, Mrs so and so who calls herself Miss Anscombe, who certainly is intelligent, though not of Kreisel's caliber.

I heard from Malcolm recently who is executive Officer of a ship (whatever that means) and was, when he wrote me, *in England*, but only for a few hours. – Drury is in France and I get news from him regularly.

I have recently been reading a fair amount: a history of the Mormons and two books of Newman's. The chief effect of this reading is to make me feel a little more my worthlessness. Though I'm aware of it only as a slumbering man is aware of certain noises going on around him which, however, don't wake him up.

I repeat: Please go the bloody, rough way! *Complain, swear*, but go on. The students are stupid but they get something out of it.

Please give my good wishes to Mrs Rhees. Remember me to any of your people who remember me.

Smythies is coming up on Saturday to read a paper at the M. Sc. Cl. (subject unknown). So long! Luck!

Ludwig Wittgenstein

Miss Anscombe – G. E. M. Anscombe, at the time a pupil, later a literary heir, editor, and translator of Wittgenstein's and also one of his successors as Professor of Philosophy at Cambridge. She was also, but was reluctant to be styled, Mrs Geach.

Kreisel – Georg Kreisel (b.1923), later an eminent mathematician and logician attended Wittgenstein's classes and had many conversations with him in these years.

two books of Newman – Wittgenstein had some familiarity with J. H. Newman's (whom he sometimes curiously styles H. Newman, as if John was a name everybody had, as in some families in Germany) *Apologia pro Vita Sua* and *A Grammar of Assent*.

322. To P. Sraffa, [20.12.1944]

Trin. Coll.
Wednesday

Dear Sraffa,

I should like to make remarks about last night's conversation.

I. About myself.

1) I'm vain and it's hard for me to admit that I'm wrong, or that an argument has dislodged me.

2) I'm *very* unclear about things, and find it very difficult to make useful remarks.

3) I think it must be said in my favour that I *long* for a better and deeper discussion; and when I fall I try, as hard as I know how, to get up and walk again.

II. About yourself.

1) You're superior to me by being much less vain.

2) You are less clumsy than I am and don't stumble as easily.

3) You seem to me less anxious to find out whether you are right or wrong than to stay where you are. And you can do this because it is so easy for you to beat off an attacker. In this way your cleverness is a danger to you and I'm *inclined* to think a grave danger. I believe the only remedy in such a case is this. *You* must *help* the other man attack you if he doesn't do it properly (provided there is anything in him at all). You must help him up if he stumbles, not try to make him stumble. Not out of kindness towards him, but so as to give yourself a chance to see if perhaps after all there's something wrong in your ideas.

With sincere good wishes, always

yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

"Best wishes" stickers with a Christmas theme.

Month and year pencilled in by Sraffa: Sraffa's diary shows meetings with Wittgenstein on Tuesdays 12 and 19 December of that year. Given the Christmas stickers the reference is probably to the latter.

1945

323. To R. Rhees, 19.1.1945

Trin. Coll.
19.1.45.

Dear Rhees,

I have arrived safely. This afternoon's my first lecture. Oh Hell! I bought the Hibbert Journal. Ewing's article is quite different from what I expected. It's stupidish and academical but *not* unkind. It treated the Germans as prospective inmates of a reformatory school, managed on modern, humane principles. In fact the whole tone of the Journal surprised me as being rather human.

Well, wish me good luck! and the same to you! Give the Philos. Society my blessing.

Let me hear from you. Thanks for your kindness during my stay! So long!

Ludwig Wittgenstein

Ewing's article – "The Ethics of Punishing Germany", *Hibbert Journal* 43: 2 (January 1945), 99–106. Ewing argued that there was no case, whether on retributive, reformatory, or deterrent grounds, for making the terms of peace for Germany as a whole more severe than they would otherwise need to be (simply for the sake of punishment).

324. To Miss Curtis, 18.5.1945

Trinity College
Cambridge
18.5.45

Dear Miss Curtis,

Mrs G. E. M. Geach has attended my classes on philosophy for four terms. As the number of my students is small and as I have discussion with them both in and outside my classes I have been able to form a definite impression of Mrs Geach's philosophical abilities.

She is, undoubtedly, the most talented female student I have had since 1930, when I began lecturing; and among my male students only 8 or 10 have either equaled or surpassed her. She has an excellent grasp of philosophical problems, great seriousness, and ability for hard work. I should like to recommend her most warmly for a Research Fellowship.

I believe that the subject which she proposes to work on is very well suited to her particular turn of mind.

The two essays she has sent in, though they definitely show a good soil for growing philosophical thoughts, are still very immature. This, however, ought not, in my opinion, to weigh against her. It is the unavoidable consequence of her having been subjected, on coming to Cambridge, to new philosophical influences which she has not had the time to digest. This process will take much hard work and can't be hurried – There is very good reason to expect that she will produce sound and interesting work in philosophy. I, therefore, wish to repeat that I recommend her most warmly.

Yours sincerely,
Ludwig Wittgenstein

Miss Curtis – Unknown, not at Somerville College, where Miss Anscombe did indeed receive an appointment somewhat later.

The following notes are attached to this draft:

[great variety of philos. subjects
sincerity
excellent teacher and explains herself in clear and simple language
always ready to consider other peoples difficulties seriously, patient impressive character]
eight or ten have equaled her and exceedingly few surpassed her.
She shows great ability in tackling philosophical problems. When discussing with her I find every word she says worth hearing. She is not windy but modest, truthful and levelheaded. I should expect of her to produce

Mrs G. E. M. Geach – Miss Anscombe, see **321** above.

325. To N. Malcolm, 22.5.1945

Trinity College
Cambridge
22.5.45.

My dear Malcolm,

This morning I had your last letter from Brooklyn. Had I had it before I saw you it would have made getting into contact with you rather easier. I worked (dictated) till one o.c. and then remembered that I might still go to the station and see you off. I looked at a time-table and saw that there was a good train to London at exactly 1 o.c. and no good train after that for some time. So I concluded you were taking the 1 o.c. train and that I'ld be too late. Later Wisdom told me you had gone by a 1.50 train – which I could still have caught. I was sorry I didn't try for that one. I should have liked to have told you about getting your letter and also to have repeated that I was glad to have seen you. I imagine there was a lot on *your* mind as well as on mine when you were with me. If you write to me, as I hope you will, you might call me by my Christian name and let me do the same. In case this should seem silly, or somehow wrong, to you, just say so frankly. I shan't be hurt.

Good luck! Affectionately

Ludwig Wittgenstein

your last letter from Brooklyn – Malcolm's reply to **320** above. It is now lost, but in *Ludwig Wittgenstein: A Memoir* Malcolm describes it thus, "I think that I may have acknowledged that my remarks about 'national character' were foolish (for I had come to think this) and I must have expressed an appreciation of what he had said in [**320**]" (p. 36).

contact with you rather easier – Malcolm describes how, in May 1945, when he had thirty-five hours' leave from his ship in Southampton and used them to visit Wittgenstein, "My meeting with him was difficult and painful. He showed no cordiality at all" (*Ludwig Wittgenstein: A Memoir*, p. 40).

326. From the Minutes of the Moral Science Faculty Board, 28.5.1945

Professor Wittgenstein proposed an increase in the fees for higher doctorates to match increases in payments to the assessors for these. Carried 5/2.

higher doctorates – DLitt and DSc awarded for a scholar's whole body of work, on his own application, after vetting by a pair of assessors. This is the only proposal by Wittgenstein recorded in the Board's minutes.

327. From the Minutes of the Moral Science Club, 31.5.1945

5th Meeting May 31st

In Mr. Braithwaite's rooms, King's.

Prof. Wittgenstein proposed that the following be sent to all people invited to open discussions: "We should be very grateful if you would open a discussion at the Cambridge Moral Science Club on . . . The purpose of the Club is to discuss problems of philosophy. In our experience only a very small number of points can be dealt with thoroughly in an evening. Therefore short papers, or a few opening remarks stating some philosophical puzzle, tend as a rule to produce better discussions than long and elaborate papers, which are difficult to digest at a single hearing."

This was unanimously accepted.

Michaelmas Term 1945

Prof. Wittgenstein proposed . . . – for similar proposals in the past see **120** and **121** above. For the controversy that this one led to see **355** below.

328. To R. Rhees, 13.[6.1945]

Trinity College
Cambridge
13.

Dear Rhees,

The Term's over and my thoughts travel in the direction of Swansea. I've been working fairly well since Easter. I am now dictating some stuff, remarks, some of which I want to embody in my first volume (if there'll ever be one). This business of dictating will take roughly another month, or 6 weeks. After that I could leave Cambridge. Do you think it would be all right for me to come to Swansea? One question is of course, can I stay with Morgan? and, if not, can I stay elsewhere?

It seems I could come about the end of July. That is, if it's all right with you.

I think it'll interest you to hear that I have had two letters from my two sisters in Austria. How they (the letters) got to England I don't know (not by post however). They (my sisters) don't say where they are (but I can guess). They seem to be well but are without news from their friends in Vienna. I think you met my niece Mariechen. Her two older boys are missing. They may, of course, be prisoners of war. I have had a letter from Arvid Sjögren who is in Stockholm. – Drury is in Guent and will probably go to the Ruhrgebiet soon. I have an idea that what he'll see there will shock him.

I hope you haven't had too bad a Term and/or too stupid students!

You'll ask: "What's '*too* stupid'?" –

Let me hear from you! Give my good wishes to Mrs Rhees.

Good luck!

So long –

Ludwig Wittgenstein

letters – From Gmunden in Upper Austria, where they lived in family houses. Wittgenstein's nephew, John Stonborough, who was with the occupying forces, made considerable efforts to visit them and no doubt it was he who forwarded their letters.

Mariechen – Marie von Stockert (née Salzer), a favourite niece. Rhees (who had studied in Austria) may have visited the family before the war. He nowhere mentions doing so.

they may be prisoners of war – They were.

Guent – Probably Ghent is meant.

Morgan – Rev. Wynford Morgan, a Methodist minister, with whom Wittgenstein often lodged in Swansea. There are some references in letters to books Wittgenstein found in the house.

329. To R. Rhees, 25.6.[1945]

Trin. Coll.
25.6.

Dear Rhees,

Thanks a lot for your letters. I don't mind if Morgan's not there. I can very well manage alone; particularly if his mother will drop in once a week. I shall write Morgan today and thank him. I'm working only *very* moderately well just now. The fact that reading my own remarks gets on my nerves shows me what a bum worker I really am. This doesn't show clearly while I'm writing. – I read a wonderful book these days: "Hadshi Murat" by Tolstoy. Do you know it? If you don't I'll try to get a copy for you.

So long! and Good luck! I'm looking forward to seeing you. Moore sends his best wishes.

L. Wittgenstein

"*Hadshi Murat*" – "Hadji Murad" in the World's Classics edition; recommended also to Russell in 1912 (**7**) and to Malcolm (**330**). Letters **335** and **337**, read together, give an indication of the merits that Wittgenstein saw in it.

330. To N. Malcolm, 26.6.1945

Trinity College
Cambridge
26.6.45.

Dear Norman,

It was good to get your letter of June 21st. I want to say something about the war being a "boredom". If a boy said that school was an intensive boredom one might answer him that, if he only could get himself to learn what can really be lerned there, he would not find it *so* boring. Now forgive me for saying that I can't help believing that an enormous lot can be learnt about human beings in this war – *if* you can keep your eyes open. And the better you are at thinking the more you'll get out of what you see. For thinking is *digesting*. If I'm writing in a preaching tone I'm just an ass! but the fact remains that if you're bored a lot it means that youre mental digestion isn't what it should be.

I think a good remedy for this is sometimes opening your eyes wider. Sometimes a book helps a little, e.g. T.'s "Hadshi Murat" wouldn't be bad. If you can't get it in America let me know. I *might* be able to get it here. I've tried the various booksellers in Cambridge, but they haven't got it and say they can't get it. Smythies said one might get it at the Oxford University Press.

My work is going damn slowly. I wish I could get a volume ready for publishing by next autumn; but I probably shan't. I'm a *bloody* bad worker!

I'm looking forward to the magazines! It was *very* nice of you to send them.

There's another fair in Cambridge now, much bigger than the one we went to. I rolled a few pennies but didn't win a thing! I need *you*.

Smythies was glad to see you. He sends his good wishes. – So do I! Look after yourself, body and soul, and be good all round!

So long!

Affectionately
Ludwig Wittgenstein

"a boredom" – A phrase taken from a letter of Malcolm's (See *Ludwig Wittgenstein: A Memoir*, p. 41): "When Wittgenstein and I talked later abut his own service in the First World War he said emphatically that he had never been bored, and I believe he even said that he did not dislike his army service" (ibid., p. 42).

T.'s – Tolstoy's. See **329** above.

another fair in Cambridge – see Malcolm, *Ludwig Wittgenstein: A Memoir*, p. 45, for an account of how Wittgenstein enjoyed visits to these fairs.

331. To G. E. Moore, [end July/beginning August 1945]

Dear Moore,

This copy is lousy, but it's all I can get. Probably you have the "Studien" already, then just throw these away. My favourites are N° 4 and 5.

5 must be played very *crisply* and with a *serious* expression, *not* as though it were meant, in some way, to be witty.

Yours

L. Wittgenstein

P.S. The Marmalade is grand and not at all *bitter*.

The date of this letter is not known but there is evidence that it belongs in this place in the series.

The pieces of music for the piano referred to were Schumann's "Studien für den Pedal-Flügel", op. 56, of which Mr Timothy Moore still has the score Wittgenstein procured, edited by Clara Schumann. She (who gave piano lessons to Wittgenstein's aunt) herself liked no. 4 best and, when she played to Mendelssohn, he much admired no. 5.

332. From G. E. Moore, 5.8.1945

86, Chesterton Road,
Cambridge
Aug. 5/45

Dear Wittgenstein,

Tim has been told that he will have to work over-time every day this week, because of the harvest. This will make him probably too late and in any case too tired to play duets in the evening; so I am afraid we must put off playing Bruckner's VIIth to you till after you come back.

I thought the Schubert Quintet quite as wonderful as you had said; but I need to hear it many more times. It seemed to me very different from the Schubert works I know – to differ from them in the same direction in which the late Beethoven works differ from the early ones.

Yours ever
G. E. Moore

the harvest – Timothy Moore's war work was on the land.

until you come back – Wittgenstein was to spend the rest of August and the whole of September in Swansea. From a letter to his sister Helene it seems that the Bruckner was played for him in March 1946.

the Schubert Quintet – Schubert's String Quintet in C major, op. posth. 163 (= D.956), which Wittgenstein thought one of the greatest works of music.

333. To G. E. Moore, [7.8.1945]

Trin. Coll.
Tuesday

Dear Moore,

Thanks for your letter. I'm sorry I shan't hear the Bruckner now. Poor Tim! – I think I understand your remark about the Schubert, and I feel something I could express in the same words. I believe it's something like this, that the Quintet has a *phantastic* kind of greatness. Is this what you'ld say? By the way, it was played *by far* better than I had expected.

So long! Good wishes!

Yours
L. Wittgenstein

Bruckner – See previous letter.

334. To N. Malcolm, 17.8.1945

c/o Rhees
96 Bryn Rd.
Swansea
17.8.45.

Dear Norman,

Today I had your parcel with the detective mags. Thanks a lot! They're the real thing! As you see I'm in Wales. I got here a few days ago and should like to stay all through September. I enjoy the climate and *not* being in Cambridge.

Rhees, whom I think you remember, is here and I see a good deal of him. – We've had two VJ days and I think there was much more noise than real joy. – I've been working a good deal this last academic year, I mean for myself and *if* everything goes well I might publish by Christmas. Not that what I've produced is good, but it is now about as good as I can make it. I think when it'll be finished I ought to come into the open with it. (By the way, this isn't gossip.) – I hope you're quite safe by now and that you'll be plain Mr, or Dr, soon. Also hope to see you before long and to tell you all I think of you. Rhees sends his best wishes. And so do I. Look after yourself, externally and internally. So long!

Thanks again!

Affectionately
Ludwig Wittgenstein

VJ days – Victory over Japan as opposed to Victory in Europe, VE-day, celebrated earlier.

isn't gossip – i.e. isn't to be bruited about.

335. To N. Malcolm, [20.8.1945]

c/o Rhees
96 Bryn Rd.
Swansea S. Wales

Dear Norman,

Thanks for your letter of Aug. 12th. Yes, I think I understand why a ship isn't a good place for "thinking" – I mean, *apart* from the fact that you're very busy.

Perhaps I ought to feel elated because the war is over. But I'm not. I can't help feeling certain that this peace is only a truce. And the pretence that the complete stamping out of the "aggressors" of this war will make this world a better place to live in, as a future war could, of course, only be started by them, stinks to high heaven and, in fact, promises a horrid future.

After these cheering thoughts let me tell you that I'm having a fairly good holiday here and that I'm feeling pretty stupid. Perhaps you'll say you've gathered as much from this letter already. – Rhees sends you his kind regards. – I hope you'll soon be demobilized and that then we'll be able to have talks, not just writes. I'm glad you got "Hadshi Murat" and I hope you'll get a lot out of it, because there is a lot *in* it. I don't know any of the German books you mention but I'm suspicious about them – because of their authors and for other reasons. – As I said: I hope you'll enjoy the Tolstoy. There's a *real* man; who has a *right* to write.

I had your mags 3 or 4 days ago and immediately thanked you for them in a letter which I hope you'll receive soon. They're really grand.

So long! Good luck!

Affectionately
Ludwig

in a letter – **334**, from which the date of this letter is inferred.

336. To N. Malcolm, 8.9.1945

c/o Rhees
96 Bryn Rd.
Swansea
8.9.45.

Dear Norman,

You're terrific! – Thanks a lot for the mags. It's nice getting a parcel from you, not only because of its contents.

The one way in which the ending of Lend-Lease really hits me is by producing a shortage of detective mags in this country. I can only hope Lord Keynes will make this quite clear in Washington. For I say: if the U.S.A. won't give us detective mags we can't give them philosophy, and so America will be the looser in the end. See? – I'm still in Swansea and enjoying my absence from Cambridge. My work isn't going well; partly because I've contracted some trouble with one of my kidneys. Nothing serious, but it makes me jumpy and bad tempered. (I've always got some excuse.) – The other day I read Johnson's "Life of Pope" and liked it very much. As soon as I get to Cambridge I'm going to send you a little book "Prayers and Meditations" by Johnson. You may not like it at all, – on the other hand you may. I do.

This is all for now. Most of this page and the next page I will leave free in case you want to make any notes. I *hope* to see you before long! Good luck! Thanks again!

Affectionately
Ludwig

337. To N. Malcolm, 20.9.1945

c/o Rhees
96 Bryn Rd
Swansea
20.9.45

Dear Norman,

Thanks for your letter of Sept 9th. I'm glad to hear that you're going to get out of the Navy before long and I hope you'll come to Cambridge before I make up my mind to resign the absurd job of a prof. of philosophy. It is a kind of living death. – I'm going back to it in a fortnight. –

I once tried to read "Resurrection" but couldn't. You see, when Tolstoy just tells a story he impresses me infinitely more than when he addresses the reader. When he turns his back to the reader then he seems to me *most* impressive. Perhaps one day we can talk about this. It seems to me his philosophy is most true when it's *latent* in the story. Talking of philosophy: my book is gradually nearing its final form, and if you're a good boy and come to Cambridge I'll let you read it. It'll probably disappoint you. And the truth is: it's pretty lousy. (Not that I could improve on it essentially if I tried for another 100 years.) This, however, doesn't worry me. What I hear about Germany and Austria does. The re-educators of the Germans are doing nicely. Pity there won't be many left to enjoy the fruit of re-education.

My landlord has a modern American translation of the Bible. I dislike the translation of the N.T. (by a man E. J. Goodspeed) but the translation of the O.T. (by a group of people) makes a lot of things clearer to me and seems to me *well* worth reading. Perhaps you'll see it one day.

So long! Look after yourself!

Affectionately
Ludwig

the re-educators of Germany – The *Umerziehung* of the German people was one of the aims of the Western occupying powers. No doubt Wittgenstein is referring to it ironically, yet apart from some pompous elements the educational aspects of reconstruction were conducted reasonably well. The hardships to which the population were exposed, however – as regards food and fuel and housing in particular – did occasion Wittgenstein's indignation. There is an exchange of letters between him and Victor Gollancz (one of the loudest protestors against the harsh treatment of the former enemy), in which he praises Gollancz's aims but criticizes his introduction of side issues into his polemic. Gollancz replied, "Thank you for your letter, which I am sure was very well meant" (12 September 1945).

modern American translation – this was The Bible: An American Translation. The *Old Testament* translated by a group of scholars under the editorship of J. M. Powis Smith, the *New Testament* translated by Edgar J. Goodspeed (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1931). The other scholars were A. R. Gordon, T. J. Meek, and L. Waterman.

338. To N. Malcolm, 6.10.1945

Trinity College
Cambridge
6.10.45.

Dear Norman

This is the little book I promised to send you. It seems to be out of print so I'm sending you my own copy. I wish to say that normally I can't read any printed prayers but that Johnsons' impressed me by being *human*. Perhaps you'll see what I mean if you read them. As likely as not you won't like them *at all*. Because you will probably not look at them from the *angle* from which I see them. (But you might.) If you don't like the book throw it away. Only first cut out the leaf with my dedication. For when I shall become *very* famous it'll become very valuable as an autograph, and your grandchildren may be able to sell it for a lot of "dough". – I'm back in Cambridge and feeling pretty lousy. God knows what my lectures will be like! Wish me luck! – I wish you lots of luck, too. Smythies sends you his best wishes.

Let me hear from you before long.

Affectionately
Ludwig

the little book I promised to send – Samuel Johnson, *Prayers and Meditations*, 3rd edn (London: H. R. Allenson, [1826/7]) was the book actually sent, according to Malcolm (*Ludwig Wittgenstein: A Memoir*, p. 99).

339. From the Minutes of the Moral Science Club, 25.10.1945

1st Meeting October 25th, 1945

In Mr. Braithwaite's rooms at King's.

Professor Wittgenstein opened a discussion on Professor Moore's paradox: "P, but I don't believe P." He maintained that the problem raised by this utterance was not to be solved by regarding it as a piece of inconsistent behaviour; nor could it be said simply that it must be a lie, for even if it was a lie the absurdity remained. We should rather consider the *asymmetry* of psychological expressions such as "know", "believe" and so on: i.e. the asymmetry between their use in the first person present and in other persons and tenses, or in suppositions. Professor Moore was present and finally said that though he agreed that the utterance was absurd, it might nevertheless be true, for it might both be true that p, and that I did not believe p.

Professor Wittgenstein was in the chair.

G. E. M. Anscombe

See **316** above (letter to G. E. Moore).

Moore replied to this at a subsequent meeting, on 29 November 1945, speaking to the title "P but I don't believe P". There is no mention of Wittgenstein's presence. The text (or the notes, rather) from which Moore read at that meeting must be what Dr Baldwin (Moore, *Selected Writings*, pp. 207ff.) has printed as "Moore's Paradox". Moore followed the line indicated in his Schilpp volume (*The Philosophy of G. E. Moore*) – as no doubt he did in his 1944 talk. The implication that when I assert p, I do not believe that not-p, is a factual matter: people do not usually lie. Perhaps this may be regarded as a psychological law, thus explaining Wittgenstein's comment in the present letter.

Moore's notes reveal (*Selected Writings*, p. 211) that Wittgenstein had also discussed the absurdity of saying "Possibly it isn't raining, but as a matter of fact it is" (also a theme discussed in the 1930s). He was aware, therefore, that the problem did not arise simply from peculiarities of "psychological verbs".

340. To N. Malcolm, 30.10.1945

Trinity College
Cambridge
30.10.45.

Dear Norman,

Thanks for your letter of Oct. 23rd. I'm glad you had a good holiday and glad that you plan coming here next year. Well, I'll try to be here then. My job is a very, very dubious one for a dozen different reasons. – My class just now is fairly large, 19 people. Many of them will drop off, of course, and I wish this process could be accelerated. – Smythies is coming and a woman who's very good, i.e., *more* than just *intelligent*. There is also an Indian (or, at least, he is dark) who seems to be all right; also two American soldiers: one's a dud, the other's nice but I don't think he knows what we're talking about. – If you'll read my book you'll have to read German. May be if I find a nice German book I'll send it to you to brush up your German. – I see Moore about once every 3 weeks. He's in very good health. Smythies is very overworked and looks pale and very thin, I'm sorry to say.

Be good! and think decent and intelligent thoughts. And not just about logic and philosophy etc!

I'm looking forward very much to the mental nourishment you've promised me. If I read your mags I often wonder how anyone can read "Mind" with all it's impotence and bankruptcy when they could read Street and Smyth mags. Well, everyone to his taste. – Good luck!

Affectionately
Ludwig

a woman who's very good – No doubt Elizabeth Anscombe.

Indian – Kantilal Jethabai Shah, at Trinity from January 1945 to June 1947, later Professor of Philosophy at the University of Poona. His notes were drawn on for *Wittgenstein's Lectures on Philosophical Psychology 1946–1947*, notes by P. T. Geach, K. J. Shah, and A. C. Jackson, ed. P. T. Geach (New York: Harvester-Wheatsheaf, 1988). See also **391** below.

341. To P. Sraffa 1.11.[1945]

Trinity Coll.
1.11.

Dear Sraffa,

Various thoughts that went through my mind recently make me write this note. As you know, the way both you and I have developed in recent years makes it impossible for us to have profitable (or pleasant) conversations with one another. On the other hand neither of us has the slightest grudge against the other (in fact the opposite) and therefore I want you to know that, should there ever be any thing you wish to talk to me about or that I can do for you, I shall be *ever so glad* to be of service to you. I know, of course, that such a case isn't likely to arrise: but you never know.

Please give my kind regards to your mother.

Yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

The year is quite uncertain but likely to be later than 1942.

342. From the Minutes of the Moral Science Club, 15.11.1945

4th meeting November 15th

Y. Smythies: "Meaning"

In Mr. Braithwaite's rooms at King's.

Mr. Smythies put the question what happens in my mind when I say "draughts" and mean "chess". He thought that there must be an act of meaning "chess" which could not be identified either with possible mental accompaniments of saying "draughts", or with surrounding circumstances, such as my behaviour before and after. It did not seem to him to be a nonsensical supposition that at the time of reading his paper he meant by its sentences the sentences of a quite different paper, e.g. one on Moore's paradox, though he had no memory of this later, and gave no signs of it at the time.

In discussion he was criticised by Professor Wittgenstein who asked whether this act of meaning was supposed to be a criterion or explanation of, e.g., two people meaning the same, and if no, how it could be used as such.

Professor Wittgenstein was in the chair.

G. E. M. Anscombe

343. To N. Malcolm, 4.12.1945

Trinity College
Cambridge
4.12.45.

Dear Norman,

Thanks for your letter and thanks for sending me van Houten's cocoa. I'm looking forward to drinking it. – I, too, was greatly impressed when I first read Freud. He's extraordinary. – Of course he is full of fishy thinking and his charm and the charm of the subject is so great that you may easily be fooled.

He always stresses what great forces in the mind, what strong prejudices work against the idea of psycho-analysis. But he never says what an enormous charm that idea has for people, just as it has for Freud himself. There may be strong prejudices against uncovering something nasty, but sometimes it is infinitely more *attractive* than it is repulsive. Unless you think *very* clearly psycho-analysis is a dangerous and a foul practice, and it's done no end of harm and, comparatively, very little good. (If you think I'm an old spinster – think again!) – All this, of course, doesn't detract from Freud's extraordinary scientific achievment. Only, extraordinary scientific achievments have a way, these days, of being used for the destruction of human beings. (I mean their bodies, or their souls, *or their intelligence*). *So hold on to your brains.*

The painting of the enclosed Xmas card has given me great trouble. The thick book is my collected works.

Smythies sends his best wishes.

Lots of good luck! May we see each other again!

Affectionately
Ludwig

Freud – References to him by Wittgenstein are collected in *Culture and Value* (see the index to that work). For my own summary of them see my *Approaches to Wittgenstein*, pp. 224–35.

thick book – An illustration on Wittgenstein's characteristically "soupy" Christmas card (see Malcolm, *Ludwig Wittgenstein: A Memoir*, p. 101).

344. From the Minutes of the Moral Science Club, 6.12.1945

7th meeting December 6th, 1945

Impromptu discussion

In Mr. Braithwaite's rooms at King's.

A discussion was held on the question "Did the world have a beginning in time?". First, it was asked whether, if the world were supposed to have begun 3 years ago, the expression "four years ago" were senseless. Professor Wittgenstein compared the status of the date "3 years ago" to that of the velocity which is the velocity of light. The expression "4 years ago" would not be absurd, any more than the expression "310 thousand kms. per second"; but given that "3 years ago" was assigned as the date of the beginning of the world, then it is absurd to ask what happened 4 years ago; though it would be a mistake, not an absurdity to say that the world began four years ago.

The discussion turned later on the status of a dispute about whether the world had a beginning in time.

Professor Wittgenstein was in the chair.

G. E. M. Anscombe

345. To N. Malcolm, 15.12.1945

c/o Rev. Morgan
Cwmdonkin Terrace
Swansea
15.12.45.

Dear Norman,

Thanks for the detective mags! They are *rich* in mental vitamines and calories. It was nice getting them from you and also your Xmas card!

I'm in Swansea again over Christmas and probably over New Year. The weather's foul, but I enjoy not being in Cambridge. I know quite a number of people here whom I like. I seem to find it more easy to get along with them here than in England. I feel much more often like smiling, e.g. when I walk in the street, or when I see children, etc. Just now I feel *very* stupid. I ought to do some work but I don't. Last term my lectures didn't go too bad, on the whole. At the beginning of the term I thought I wouldn't be able to manage them. I felt a queer kind of exhaustion, sometimes coming on suddenly. Then a doctor prescribed me glucose and that helped me enormously and I was pretty fit afterwards.

I'll stop now. This letter's lousy, I know. But it's as good as I can do just now.

Good luck! Be good!

Affectionately
Ludwig

1946

346. To N. Malcolm, 15.1.1946

Trinity College
Cambridge
15.1.46

Dear Norman,

Your parcel containing cocoa and peaches arrived today. Thanks ever so much. It was lovely to get it. And is the cocoa good!! – I've had almost a month in Swansea and I haven't done a stroke of work. I wish all your food for my body and mind could go to a better person. My lectures begin in 3 days. I'll talk a lot of rubbish. It would be nice if you could come to Cambridge for an academic year before I resign my job! It might be a good thing, and a good conclusion for my dubious professorial career.

Thanks again! and let me hear how you're getting on.

Affectionately
Ludwig

Malcolm had been released from the US Navy and re-appointed at Princeton. He applied to spend the academic year 1946–7 in Cambridge. See his *Ludwig Wittgenstein: A Memoir*, p. 102.

347. From J. Taylor, 22.1.1946

S.S. "Stag Hound"
U.S. Lines
Panama
22.1.46

Dear Wittgenstein

You have probably heard that I was appointed to the Lectureship which Paul held at Melbourne. I am now en route.

You will remember that when I last saw you, you asked me something of the following sort: with reference to a letter which I once wrote you and which you interpreted as a veiled complaint that I had somehow been cheated in learning from you, – was this interpretation in fact false, or in any case was it or was it not true that I felt at that time that I had been cheated? (I don't have a good memory and I may have given a slightly inaccurate account in the last sentence, but I hope not essentially so.) You will remember that I hesitated in replying and that you said something like "Say what first comes into your mind, not what goes through your mind after careful reflection".

I don't think that in this case the outcome of reflection *need* be a "rationalization" in the sense of the "Freudians". And I think that there is a complication in the matter which made it unsatisfactory to answer "Yes" or "No", and that this was mainly the reason for my long hesitation. There are really, I think, when the thing is sorted out, two steps in the answer. If the question is just "Did I feel at that time (or at any other time) that I had been cheated?", then the answer is the one I gave when I last saw you after thinking about it, simply "No". (I have at various times discussed your teaching at Cambridge with other former pupils of yours who in some cases did think they had been cheated; in such discussions I have disagreed in all cases with the other person.) However the original question is not far distant from the question "Did you feel at that time that you had been *misled*?" I should have to answer to this that at that time, and in fact now, I did feel and feel that I was misled. But the sense of "misled" is important. I should say that the sense in which I was misled is such a sense as would almost certainly be applicable in the case of very good, i.e. more or less dazzling, instruction. If one receives very valuable instruction indeed, and is dazzled by it, then one is almost certain, I should have thought, to be blinded to the proper appraisal of some things and aspects of things which are not prominent in that instruction. This is certainly what happened in my case. I found that I had very painfully to accustom my eyes to look at other things in a new way. However at no time in this process (which I suppose is still going on) did I think ill of what you had taught me, or tried to teach me, or of your work in general. I have sometimes been more puzzled than I am now to formulate what the worth of your work consists in, but even at these times I did not think badly of it, nor in fact other than well of it. It was in fact true as you have suggested that I found I could myself do practically nothing with your ideas *directly*, and this was of course most disturbing.

I think this is as clear as I can get the matter. Address: Department of Philosophy, University of Melbourne, Melbourne N. 3, Victoria, Australia.

Best wishes.

Yours

Taylor

Paul – George Paul was responsible for bringing the ideas of Wittgenstein first to Australia and then (the period of this letter) to Oxford.

348. To R. Rhees, 7.2.1946

Trinity College
Cambridge
7.2.46.

Dear Rhees,

Of course you must give my name – and *why in hell* ask, when I've asked you to do it 100 times?! – I'ld like you to get the Dundee job but I'ld like it better if Britton got it and you got his job – for obvious reasons. – My lectures aren't too terribly bad but they're pretty poor. I'm talking about problems of Gestalt psychology and am frightfully unclear myself and unable to get to the deep aspects of the matter. My class too is very primitive and often when I talk of "tribes" I think the most primitive tribe is right in front of me. – I feel mentally and morally mixed up. –

So long!

Ludwig Wittgenstein

Of course you must give my name – As a referee in a job application.

Britton – Karl Britton, a Cambridge graduate, was currently teaching at Swansea. Rhees taught during the war as a substitute for Britton but succeeded to his post only in 1951.

349. To R. Rhees, 20.4.[1946]

c/o Rev. Morgan
2 Cwmdonkin Terr.
Swansea
Sunday 20th Apr.

Dear Rhees,

Thanks for your letter of April 16th. What you write didn't seem to me bosh. I could translate it all into my own language (I don't mean German). I feel very desperate these days and I don't know how to escape from despair. I'm always thinking, as I have so often done in the past, of resigning my job, but I don't know whether that would help matters at all. – Among the books which Morgan has on his shelf but doesn't read there are Bacon's philosophical works. I've been reading in them, mostly in the Novum Organum. I don't find it as interesting, or useful, as I thought I would. Quotations had led me to think that I'ld find it rather thrilling.

So long! Give my good wishes to Mrs Rhees.

Good luck!

Ludwig Wittgenstein

May fate be merciful!

Bacon's philosophical works – But see **417** below.

350. To N. Malcolm, 25.4.1946

Trinity College
Cambridge
25.4.46.

My dear Norman,

Thank you ever so much for the mags I got from you yesterday. It was good to feel that we're still in contact. I feel *very* perturbed in my mind. I haven't done any decent work for ages apart from my classes. They went all right last term. But now my brain feels burnt out, as though only the four walls were left standing, and some char[r]ed remains. Let's hope that I'll be in moderately good condition when you'll be here! I'm looking forward to seeing you. I spent most of the Easter vac in Swansea. I saw Rhees there and had discussiones with him. I came up the day before yesterday. I haven't yet seen Smythies. Tomorrow's my first lecture. *Oh hell!!*

I wish you a better head and a better heart than I have.

Affectionately
Ludwig

when you'll be here! – Malcolm had been granted the fellowship referred to in **346** above and did indeed spend 1946–7 in Cambridge (see e.g. **359** below). His letters resume in July–August 1947.

351. To W. G. Maclagan, 8.5.1946

Trinity College
Cambridge
8.5.46

Dear Professor Maclagan,

Mr Rush Rhees began attending my classes on philosophy in 1935. He came to them for two or three years and during that time and in all the following years we had innumerable philosophical discussions, as well as conversations on ever so many other subjects. He has become a close personal friend of mine.

He has an excellent grasp of philosophical problems and is keenly interested in a great variety of philosophical subjects – including moral and political philosophy about which he has thought a great deal and is, I believe, extremely well read.

He investigates philosophical problems in a fruitful way, i.e., a way which promises definite progress, as opposed to a mere moving in circles.

I am certain that he is as good a teacher as could be found – most conscientious, taking great personal interest in the welfare of his students, indefatigable, patient and patient in discussion.

That he has not published philosophical writings ought not, in my opinion, to count against him. His reluctance to publish is not due to a lack of fruitful thoughts but to a very rare amount of self-criticism.

Mr Rhees has a very exceptional character. He is kindly, most serious, conscientious to a fault, – an excellent colleague and friend.

Any Philosophical Department should be proud of having him amongst its members.

Yours sincerely,
L.Wittgenstein

Maclagan – W. G. Maclagan was appointed Professor in Glasgow in 1945.

352. To R. Rhees, 21.5.1946

Trinity College
Cambridge
21.5.46.

Dear Rhees,

Thanks for your letter of May 19th, which arrived this morning. I was glad to hear that they had the sense to offer you an appointment again at Swansea. I wish to God you'ld take it!! I don't know, of course, what your special reasons are for wanting to leave Swansea, but *please* weigh them damn carefully. I should, for personal reasons, *hate* you to leave Swansea. Our talks and discussions have done me good. *Don't stupidly throw away an opportunity of doing some good.* Your derogatory remarks about your philosophical abilities and success are so much rubbish. *You are all right.* And I mean just that: nothing more and nothing less. – Philosophical influences *much worse* than yours and mine are spreading rapidly, and it's *important* that you should stay at your job. That your success won't be brilliant is certain; in fact it will be meagre, it's bound to be. Please, if you possibly can, resign yourself to it and stay on. – Don't misunderstand me. I'm not trying to appear wise. I'm just as silly as you are. But that doesn't make you any less silly.

So long!

Ludwig Wittgenstein

P.S. Read this letter again from the beginning.
Good wishes!

353. To G. E. Moore, [October 1946]

Trinity College
Cambridge
Thursday

Dear Moore,

I was sorry I was not allowed to see you today. Mrs Moore wrote to me, could I come next Tuesday, instead. Now I'm free on Tuesday afternoon and, as you know, should like to see you, not for any particular reason, but in an ordinary friendly way. But I am sure you'll understand that, – under the peculiar circumstances, – I should like to know whether what Mrs Moore wrote to me was an honest to God invitation for me to come and see you on Tuesday, or whether it was a kind of hint that I'ld better not try to see you. If it was the latter, please don't hesitate to say so. I will not be hurt *in the slightest*, for I know that queer things happen in this world. It's one of the few things I've really learnt in my life. So please, if that's how it is, just write on a p.c. something like "Don't come". I enclose a card in case you haven't got one. I'll understand everything. Good luck and good wishes!

Yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

not allowed to see you – This seems to refer to an occasion on which Mrs Moore turned Wittgenstein away at the door, on the grounds that the doctors did not want Moore (who had had a stroke) to excite himself in discussion. Norman Malcolm, *Ludwig Wittgenstein: A Memoir*, pp. 56–7 has a similar story about a time limit set on visits: he describes how Wittgenstein was rather displeased and felt that Moore should be allowed "to die with his boots on", if it so turned out. Mrs Moore, in conversation, confirmed an actual exclusion on one occasion, maintaining, however, that Moore himself did not feel equal to the visit.

354. To R. Rhees, 15.10.1946

Trinity College
Cambridge
15.10.46.

Dear Rhees,

I'm sorry I haven't written sooner and thanked you for your letter. Laziness was one cause but another was that I'm not feeling well. I get queer states of mental exhaustion which are *very* terrifying. I've had two lectures so far. There's a crowd coming to them as always at the beginning of the year when they don't know what to expect. Still my lectures went quite well, except for the fact that during my second lecture I sometimes got so exhausted that I could hardly speak. But my brain, oddly enough, was very active. What's to become of it all I don't know. I plan to see a doctor (*not* a psychologist) about it, hoping, *completely* against hope, that he can advise me something. I dislike this place intensely, and the worst part of it is that I haven't got a *real* friend here, i.e., someone who'ld go out of his way to do something for me.

I saw Moore a week ago for a short time. He had recently been ill (heart trouble) and looked aged, but his interest in philosophy was as lively and agreable as ever. I gave him your good wishes and he is returning them (or rather, not the identical ones but exactly similar ones).

Drury is in Dublin, studying for his M.D.: I wish he were nearer here. I believe he'll return to England about Christmas.

Malcolm is here and very seriously studying. He is having a discussion with me once a week. He is a decent and serious man.

May God help me, and may I be able to come to Swansea at Christmas as usual.

Let me hear from you before long!

As always,
Ludwig Wittgenstein

355. From the Minutes of the Moral Science Club, 26.10.1946

Second Meeting Oct. 26th, 1946

Dr. K. R. Popper: *Methods in Philosophy*

In Mr. Braithwaite's rooms at King's.

In the first part of his paper Dr. Popper explained how he chose this topic as a consequence of his astonishment and surprise at the Secretary's letter of invitation, which made use of such expressions as, "a short paper", "open a discussion", "state a philosophical puzzle" etc., which reflected a different view from his own as to what philosophy is. He went on to describe this philosophy and its origins, giving it the label "Linguistic Philosophy" (Wittgenstein and his "school"). He considers the advent of this School an epoch in philosophy, but he would criticise it very strongly on several points. Thus while it occupies itself with "preliminaries" it claims exclusiveness to the title of "philosophy" and never goes beyond these "preliminaries" to the more important problems of philosophy. After all, one knows what he "means" by his philosophic question and the important thing is to provide the "true answer" for it. It also cultivates "esoterism".

In discussion, however, it turned out that to give an example of the "beyond the preliminaries" problems is a difficult task which calls for both labour and time. The examples which Dr. Popper actually suggested seemed to some of the audience to be no more than problems in pure math. or Sociology. The meeting was charged to an unusual degree with a spirit of controversy.

Prof. Wittgenstein was in the chair.

Wasfi Hijab
(Sec.)

Though dated as above in the Minute Book this meeting was actually held on 25 October (a Friday). Braithwaite, not Wittgenstein, was in the chair (testimony of Braithwaite himself and S. Toulmin).

Dr. K. R. Popper – Later Sir Karl (1902–94), of Viennese origin, seemed close to the Vienna Circle but always considered himself distinct from it because of his implausible but influential theory of scientific method (progress is measured by the falsification of hypotheses). At the time of this meeting Popper's *The Open Society and its Enemies* had just been published, to considerable acclaim, and he had taken up a Chair in London. The controversy caused by the meeting was revived much later by Popper in *The Philosophy of Karl Popper*, ed. P. Schilpp, Library of Living Philosophers (LaSalle, Ill.: Open Court, 1974), pp. 97–9: in Popper's lively account Wittgenstein threatened him with a poker and he, asked for an example of a moral rule, replied, "You should not threaten visiting lecturers with pokers." Wittgenstein seems in fact to have left, and in his usual manner (drawing out his pocket watch and exclaiming "Golly, is it that late?") by the time of this *bon mot* nor did anyone seriously suppose Popper in danger. The contemporary reaction was mild enough (see Wittgenstein's own letters below). All concerned (not least Popper) were well accustomed to giving as well as receiving apostolic blows and knocks. The controversy takes the journalistic standpoint of presupposing as normal a decorum rarely observed outside the House of Lords, if even there. See, however, Edmonds and Eidinow, *Wittgenstein's Poker*, and I. Grattan-Guinness, "Russell and Karl Popper: Their Personal Contacts", *Russell* 12: 1 (1992), 3–18, which gives Russell's reaction ("In Wittgenstein this was to be expected"). Popper claimed victory, Wittgenstein's reaction can be seen below (**356–8**).

356. To R. Rhees, 28.10.1946

Trinity College
Cambridge
28.10.46.

Dear Rhees,

This is only to let you know that the doctor's advice, to take vitamin B, *seems* to have been a good one. The fact is that several hours after taking it for the first time ('Benerva', Roche) I felt *much* less exhausted, in spite of hardish work, and I haven't had another of my queer attacks since. (I'm taking it regularly now). Try it; it *might* do you good and it can't harm you. Of course, it's only 5 days since I started. On Friday I lectured (as usual) from 5 to 7 and then attended a Moral Sc. Club meeting from 8.30 to 11, a lousy meeting, by the way, in which an ass, Dr Popper from London, talked more mushy rubbish than I've heard for a long time. I talked a lot (as usual) and felt no bad effects. I couldn't conceivably have done this the week before. This state mayn't last, but now, at my rate, it exists (or subsists?). May the weather not be too bloody hard on you!

Yours
Ludwig Wittgenstein

Moral Sc. Club meeting – See item **355** above.

357. To G. E. Moore, 14.11.1946

Trin. Coll. Camb.
14.11.46.

Dear Moore,

I don't believe for a moment that you'll want to come to the Moral Sc. Club tonight (I'm giving a talk, roughly, on what I believe philosophy is, or what the method of philosophy is) – but I want to say that if you *should* turn up for the paper, or the discussion, the club, and particularly I, would be *honoured*.

Yours sincerely
L. Wittgenstein

a talk on . . . what the method of philosophy is – See **358**.

358. From the Minutes of the Moral Science Club, 14.11.1946

Fifth meeting Nov. 14th, 1946

Prof. Wittgenstein: *Philosophy*

In Mr. Braithwaite's rooms at King's.

Prof. Wittgenstein's main aim in this paper was to correct some misunderstandings about philosophy as practised by the Cambridge School (i.e. by Wittgenstein himself). In a way the paper was a reply to Dr. Popper's paper (Oct. 23rd). Investigating the uses of words, which is only a part of what is attempted here, is not carried out for any linguistic purpose, as shown by the fact that the description of the uses is given to those who already know what the word means, rather these uses of a word are discussed as characterisations of the concept for which the word stands. A question may be answered in either one of two ways: by giving an explicit answer to it, or by showing how the question is a muddled one, and therefore should not have been asked. Philosophical questions are answered in the second way, for the general form of a philosophical question is, "I am in a muddle; I don't know my way." Prof. Wittgenstein gave as an example what Mach did in connection with the muddle about "temperature", and he quoted with approval what Herz said about such questions as, "What is force?". Herz thought that people ask such questions, but not "What is iron?", e.g., are[?] the puzzling features of "force"; and when these puzzling features are classified the mind, satisfied, will stop asking the question.

One of the interesting points that emerged in the discussion was how the same question uttered by another person may not be a muddle question at all. "It is like two persons having identical rooms; when coming to the first you may implore the owner to tidy it up and put it in order, while to the second you may not say anything of the sort, even the very dust may be necessary."

Dr. Ewing was in the chair.

Wasfi Hijab

Dr. Popper's paper – See **355** above.

Mach – See Ernst Mach's *Principles of the Theory of Heat*, Vienna Circle Collection (Dordrecht: Reidel, 1986), p. 56. "Actual temperature" is an arbitrary creation, akin to Newton's ideas of "absolute time" and "absolute space".

Herz – Hertz: see **246** above (Wittgenstein's first paper to the Club after being elected Professor) and notes.

are [?] – Corrected to, or from, "is". Possibly the words "the reason" or the like have dropped out before "that" in the preceding line.

359. To G. E. Moore, 3.12.1946

Trinity College
Cambridge
3.12.46.

Dear Moore,

As far as I can see now I will be in London on Thursday afternoon and unable to see you. Would it be all right if I called on you in case I were here after all? If you're otherwise engaged then, it doesn't matter and I'll just go again. If, as is most likely, I shan't be back on Thursday afternoon, could I see you Thursday week? – Price at the last Mor. Sc. Cl. meeting was *by far* better than Austin had been. Price was willing to discuss important points. Unfortunately (I believe) Russell was there and most disagreeable. Glib and superficial, though, as always, *astonishingly* quick. I left at about 10.30 and felt exceedingly happy when I was out in the street and away from the atmosphere of the M. Sc. Cl.

So long!

Yours

L. Wittgenstein

Price – The minutes of the club show that on 29 November 1946, with Wittgenstein in the chair, Price spoke on "Universals and Resemblances", which is also the title of the first chapter of his *Thinking and Experience* (London: Hutchinson, 1953).

Austin – J. L. Austin (1911–60) at this time Fellow of Magdalen College, later White's Professor of Moral Philosophy at the University of Oxford. In his case the minutes record a paper on "Nondescription" delivered on 31 October 1946, also with Wittgenstein in the chair. They make it clear that Austin's point of departure was the occurrence of ceremonial or contractual uses of verbs in the first person ("I name this ship the *Queen Elizabeth*", and the like), where the temptation to regard the utterance as true or false should (according to Austin) be resisted. The minutes record that "A not very successful attempt was made to separate philosophical from linguistic considerations", and any who remember Austin will believe this to be accurate. Austin developed these ideas later in "Performative Utterances", reprinted in his *Philosophical Papers* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961) and in *How to Do Things with Words* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1962). (These publications were both posthumous.)

1947

360. To G. E. Moore, 18.2.1947

Trinity Coll. Camb.
18.2.47.

Dear Moore,

I think I'd better not come and see you this Thursday. I'm in good health, but teaching philosophy almost every day seems to exhaust me a good deal and it might be better if I avoid a serious talk on Thursday. You know, of course, I'd *like* to come, for I enjoy talking with you, and I don't really know if it's worth saving my strength for teaching people most of whom can't learn anything anyway. If you let me I'll come to you next week or the week after.

Yours ever
Ludwig Wittgenstein

361. To G. H. von Wright, 21.2.1947

Trinity College
Cambridge
21.2.47.

Dear Professor von Wright,

Thank you for your letter of Feb. 14th. My lectures vary a great deal. They are sometimes satisfactory, sometimes very unsatisfactory. My mind, for reasons I don't know, often feels very exhausted. (I am, by the way, in perfectly good health.) This equilibrium of mine is so labile that, before long, my lectures *may* become hopelessly inadequate and that, after a struggle, I may have to give up teaching. Why do I write you all this? Because, if I should feel sterile and exhausted next Easter Term, I'ld ask you not to come to my classes; for your presence, in that case, might make things more difficult for me. Otherwise I shall be glad if you will attend.

I'm glad that you are going to lecture here, and I know that by attending your lectures I could learn a very great deal. In spite of this I will not come to them – for the *sole* reason that, in order to *live* and to *work*, I have to allow *no* import of foreign goods (i.e., philosophical ones) into my mind. For the same reason I haven't read your book, though I am convinced of it's excellence. If you think that I'm getting old – you're right. So long! and good luck!

Yours sincerely,
Ludwig Wittgenstein

your book – No doubt *The Logical Problem of Induction* (Helsingfors: Finnish Literary Society, 1941).

362. From J. Wisdom, 25.3.1947

8 Great Ormond St
London WC1
March 25 1947

Dear Wittgenstein

I enclose 2 versions for Chambers Encyclopedia. I think the shorter is likely to be preferred. Should there be anything in either which you feel ought not to go unchanged I hope you will let me know.

And will you kindly fill in the dates where I am uncertain and have used pencil and also the proper title of the chair you occupy. I chose this expression rather than 'professor' as less likely to mislead American and others.

I am sorry to bother you again. Even the shorter version you may notice is not 100 but 190 words in length.

Yours

John Wisdom

Chambers Encyclopedia – See note to **364**.

363. To J. Wisdom, 28.3.1947

Trinity College
Cambridge
28.3.47

Dear Wisdom,

I enclose an article of about 120 words for the Encyclopedia, as I believe it ought to be written. I will in what follows justify it's deviations from your drafts.

1) Your remark that I influenced the Vienna Circle between 1920 and 1928 is wrong. I didn't even know of their existence till 1925 and had practically no philosophical discussion with any of them before 1929, when I began to have a great many, whenever I was in Vienna on holiday.

2) What you write about the contents of Tr.L.Ph. can't give anyone any idea of it and, in fact, it can't be done in a few lines at all. Nor I believe is it necessary as the book is printed.

3) I started lecturing in 1929, though then without any University post. I don't think my exact status can interest readers of the Encyclopedia much. But I leave this to you.

4) The title of my chair is Professorship of "Philosophy" pure and simple. I put it in inverted commas to show that it is a title and that I am not the only Prof. of philosophy here.

5) To say what sort of work I did after 1929, and not just that I was "*impressed by*" something or that my work led to something, is *absolutely essential*; and without it it would, in my opinion, be wrong, because misleading, to print this article. Also the remark that my researches are the subject of my lectures is essential. Without these statements I would consider the article unfair to me, and I hope and believe that in your heart you'ld like to be fair to me.

I have, as I wanted an impartial judgement, shown your drafts to Moore and discussed my proposed alternative with him. He agreed with me on every point without reserve.

If you think that the article in the form I wrote it is all right, please send it to the Chambers people. If you don't approve of it I'ld rather it weren't published at all.

I wish you good thoughts and good feelings.

Yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

364. From J. Wisdom, 1.4.1947

8 Great Ormond St
London W.C.1
April 1 1947

Dear Wittgenstein,

I am quite content for the article you sent me to be published. It does not seem to me to give an adequate impression of the scope of your work. But you ask me if I think the article is all right to send it on to Chambers and I do think it all right. I am not sending it on to Chambers because it could not be published as mine. This need make no difficulty. For I think you will not wish it to appear as yours but will prefer it to appear unsigned. I have been on the telephone to Chambers. They are not publishing any autobiographical articles but an unsigned one would fill their bill. They will write to you.

I am sending this to Trinity but I hope you are by now having rest and good air at Swansea.

Yours

John Wisdom

Chambers Encyclopedia – The actual entry in the *Chambers Encyclopedia*, new edn, vol. 14 (London: George Newnes, 1950), vol. 14, was this:

> Wittgenstein, Ludwig (1889–), Austrian philosopher, was born in Vienna and educated in Vienna, Charlottenburg and Cambridge. By his *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (1921) and numerous discussions Wittgenstein has greatly influenced the group of Logical Positivist known as the "Vienna Circle" (see Logical Positivism). In 1929 he returned to Cambridge where he became fellow of Trinity College in 1931 and professor of philosophy (1939–47). His researches since 1929 (unpublished) bear chiefly on the philosophy of psychology and mathematics.

The article is unsigned. In a letter of 17 February 1972 Wisdom assured the present editor that "all or almost all in the piece [quoted above] was written by [Wittgenstein]".

365. To R. Rhees, 30.4.1947

Trinity College
Cambridge
30.4.47.

Dear Rhees,

Thanks for your letter and the paper. Our letters crossed and I have, meanwhile, heard that my bag has left Swansea and that I have paid for it, though it hasn't yet arrived, but I'm told that there's still hope. I won't attempt to write a criticism of your article, except to say that I agree with its tendency and *partly* with the way it's expressed. Polemic, or the art of throwing eggs, is, as you well know, as highly skilled a job as say boxing. Where I disagree with your article it isn't because I think it hits too hard (I don't think that's possible) but perhaps because I think that there are not enough square blows and too many gestures: Needless to say, I couldn't have produced as good an article, and it's better to produce something in the right direction than to produce nothing. I'ld love you to throw eggs at Ryle – but keep your face straight and throw them well! The difficulty is: not to make superfluous noises, or gestures, which don't harm the other man but only yourself. Forgive me this preaching. It may be stupid but the intension's good. And please write against Ryle if you possibly can. – I found Drury perfectly normal. He talked with great intelligence about his illness. He is going to stay in Dublin as Dr Moore's assistant until X-mas. How far he is *safe*, I mean, how likely it is that his former state will return, that, of course, I don't know, and I don't feel in the least sanguine about it.

So long! Thanks for everything!

Ludwig Wittgenstein

your article – "I sent him a piece I had written in a 'leftist' paper attacking the institution of Marriage Guidance Councils. In my letter I spoke of a review by Gilbert Ryle in *Mind* and said I'd like to throw an egg or two at that if I could" (Rhees, in *Ludwig Wittgenstein: Personal Recollections*, p. 224: Rhees proceeds to quote from the letter above). The review by Ryle will be that of Popper's *Open Society and its Enemies*, in *Mind* (1947), 167–72. Ryle was always a sympathetic reviewer but this is, considering the polemical content of the book, an unusually warm endorsement. Probably Rhees objected to the idea common to Ryle and Popper that the conduct of human affairs was an experimental matter to be pursued along scientific lines, but he (and Wittgenstein) will have been (if one may say so) riled particularly by a closing allusion to "Wittgenstein's esotericisms", echoing the very slur of Popper's reported in **355**.

his illness – Drury relates that, after April 1946, "I did not see Wittgenstein again for over a year. It was a time of considerable emotional turmoil and indecision for me – finding it difficult to settle down after the experiences of the war. I felt for the first time that I did not want to discuss my problems with him . . ." (Rhees (ed.), *Recollections of Wittgenstein*, p. 151).

Dr Moore – Medical Superintendent of St Patrick's Hospital, a psychiatric hospital endowed by Dean Swift when he thought himself to be mad.

366. To G. H. von Wright, 6.6.1947

Trinity College
Cambridge
6.6.47

Dear v. Wright,

This is only to thank you for your letter. I'm glad you liked Smythies. I didn't doubt, you would. I feel extremely run down and tired myself and, therefore, shan't write any more today. I hope to see you after the middle of June. Take good care of my typescript – whatever you think of it. I have two more copies of it, but in your copy there are some corrections and additions which don't appear in the other copies.

I very much hope you'll have a good, if short, rest.

Yours

L. Wittgenstein

my typescript – This was the final version of the German text of part I of *Philosophical Investigations* (*Spätfassung* in Joachim Schulte's Kritisch-genetische Edition of *Philosophische Untersuchungen* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 2001)). Von Wright took it to Oxford where he was to deliver some lectures. Only two of the three copies survive (TSS 227 a and b), the third, which was actually used for the printing, is now lost, but, judging by the remark about corrections and additions, was probably that entrusted to von Wright. See also **374**.

367. To J. T. Saunders (Assistant Registrary), 8.6.1947

Trinity College
Cambridge
8.6.47

Dear Saunders,

I wish to apply for Sabbathical Leave for the Michaelmas Term 1947. If it is granted I propose to devote it to research.

Yours sincerely,
L. Wittgenstein

Cambridge University Archives, Personnel files, Office memorandum:

6.[6].47
Wittgenstein
Wants a Sabbatical
term M.T. 1947
will go away to Swansea
Research Student Hijab
$1^{1}/_{2}$–2 hour a week
with [pay] Hijab for once a fortnight
? Wisdom

368. To J. T. Saunders, 18.6.1947

Trin. Coll. Camb.
18.6.47

Dear Saunders,

Thank you for your letter of June 14th. I am very grateful to the General Board for granting me Sabbatical Leave.

Yours sincerely
L. Wittgenstein

369. To Y. Smythies, 27.7.1947

1, Cwmdonkin Terrace,
Swansea
27.7.47

Dear Smythies

The *immediate* reason for writing to you is this: I left a couple of shirts at your house when I was at Oxford, and your wife was kind enough to promise to give them to a seamstress as they needed mending. I'ld like to know if they actually were mend*able* and, if so, whether they were mended. I'm in no hurry for them. If I have them by the end of August it's all right. So please enquire. I feel a great deal better here than in Cambridge. That's only natural. I work a fair amount though only moderately successfully. I don't know where I'll spend my sabbatical Michaelmas Term, nor whether I hadn't better resign my job for good, as that term, in all likelihood, won't be enough for me to get a part of my book ready for publication (*if* this can be done at all). For this seems to be the thing I want to do.

I got a copy of "Changing World" and have read your review and it isn't bad, I think. In fact the reviews seemed to me to be the best part of that magazine; the articles, I thought, were *muck*.

I'm intending to go to Ireland to see Drury on Aug. 6th and to return on Aug. 19th. Between Aug. 19th and Sept. 12th I'll *probably* be in Ickenham with Richards, and then I hope to go to Austria for 3 weeks. About Oct. 7th I'll be in Cambridge for a few days.

My soul is as much in a mess as it was before, but I'm in better health and in far more human surroundings and therefore happier. Give my good wishes to your wife.

Affectionately

Ludwig Wittgenstein

"Changing World" – Issue no.1 (Summer 1947), 72–81. Short-lived periodical in which Smythies published a review of Bertrand Russell's *History of Western Philosophy*, a book which, he feared, would encourage slipshod thinking. For some account of Smythies' attitudes see Peter J.Conradi, *Iris Murdoch: A Life* (London: HarperCollins, 2001), p. 381. Smythies is known to have been the original of a central character in Iris Murdoch's first published novel *Under the Net* (1956).

Richards – Ben Richards (1924–2000) was a medical student at King's College, Cambridge when Wittgenstein met him in 1945. He became the last great attachment of Wittgenstein's life.

Ickenham – Part of Uxbridge on the western outskirts of London.

370. From G. H. von Wright, 31.7.1947

Valö, Inga, Finland
31.VII 1947

Dear Wittgenstein,

It is now two weeks that I have been at home, i.e. in my parents' summer-house in an island on the coast of the Gulf of Finland. Though, from more than one point of view, I had to regret that my visit to Cambridge this Spring was so short, it was, on the other hand, absolutely necessary for me to go aside and "cool my head" after all the strong impressions I had had. Never before, to my memory, going abroad meant so much to my education.

I learnt an enormous mass philosophy. Why and how it came to be so, you know as well as I do. What will be the consequences of it, is not as yet to be foreseen, – I can only hope they will be of more good than harm, in the long run. I know that a hard struggle is needed before the imported goods will become my own. Certain things will be ejaculated, other things assimilated. If, at the end, no visible traces of your influence remain in my thought, which is extremely unlikely, so shall I at least always have to acknowledge that I learnt from you, how difficult philosophy must be, if it is to be more than a collection of materials for academic controversy and learned conversation.

Still more, perhaps, did the stay in Cambridge mean to my human being, so to say. It was as though something, which had begun to grow in me in the last years, suddenly had ripened. Things which I hardly thought of before, became of vital importance, new values and ideals appeared and greatly revised my outlook on life. The question may again be raised, whether for good or bad. I have an awful feeling, I might as well have said conviction, that nothing I consciously undertake for the sake of my soul can make me substantially different from what I am, a pharisee in minutest details, because I shall always lack courage to let myself down in the abys of despair which I know I had to pass in order to be saved.

I feel that I could forget all that I have read of you and even all you said to me in conversation and still, deep in my heart, remember the hours we were together, even the most trifling details, and rejoice at those memories. This is perhaps not as stupid as it may sound. You remember what Alyosha said to the boys at the stone: "There is nothing higher and stronger and more wholesome and good for life in the future than some good memory." Be it so with my memories of you!

If you don't mind it, I shall write to you at times. I shall not expect you to answer, but whenever you will send me a line I shall be *very* glad. – My address is: 7, Tölötullgatan, Helsingfors (Finland).

I hope you are in good health and that you will be able to use your sabbatic term for the purpose you planned. With kindest regards.

Yours

Georg Henrik von Wright

Alyosha – Dostoevsky's novels (*The Brothers Karamazov* in particular) were a moral frame of reference for Wittgenstein and his friends and family. He himself was often thought of as Alyosha but once said to Smythies, "I am Smerdyakov, I am Dr Mabuse." For the theme see my "The Brothers Wittgenstein" in Suchy et al. (eds), *Empty Sleeve*, pp. 53–66.

371. To G. H. von Wright, 27.8.1947

Trinity Coll. Camb.
27.8.47

Dear v. Wright,

Thank you very much for your letter. It meant a great deal to me to have you in Cambridge for a term. I, too, wish it had been for longer. I've been to Ireland and I intend to go to Vienna on Sept. 10th and to return to England about Oct. 7th. I believe that I'll then resign my professorship and go somewhere where I can be alone for a longish time in order to think and, *if possible*, to finish a part of my book. I thought of going to Norway for that purpose but may go to Ireland instead. I'm not sure. I haven't told the Cambridge authorities anything about it so far, as it's not yet *absolutely* certain. (Though just now I can't see how it can be avoided, I mean, my leaving Cambridge.) My mind just now is in *great* disorder. It's partly due to this, that I dread seeing Vienna again after all that's happened and, in a way, I also dread chucking my job at Cambridge. But I'll get over it. May I see you again some day!! I wish you all good luck for your outer life, but by far more for your inner life; and I wish myself the same. My case is *much* more hopeless, I feel, than yours. – I like to think of our time at Cambridge. Let me remain in contact with you.

Yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

A letter of almost identical content was sent to Malcolm on the same day.

372. To P. Sraffa, 10.10.1947

Trin. Coll. Camb.
10.10.47

Dear Sraffa,

When I left your room this morning I had a strong and *extremely* queer impression. – As you know some years ago we were what I should have called "friends". About our frequent conversations, their difficulties and their good effects I needn't talk; you know all that. Then came a time when I got more and more on your nerves and our conversations became less fruitful. You, very naturally, reacted with a certain violence and rudeness, and in consequence of this, and of outward circumstances, we met less and less frequently. Your final really rude outbursts (about 1940 I think) hurt me and angered me a great deal. After a longish time, very gradually my feeling changed. I began to expect a certain unfriendliness from you and my feeling of friendship cooled off, particularly when I seemed to discover that you were no longer wishing to he *helpful* when I came to you for advice, etc. For, gradually, you seemed to me to become a *Trinity Don*: stiff, stand-offish and unfriendly. For a long time I couldn't believe in *that* change. I always told myself that all that happened was that I increasingly got on your nerves. But this didn't seem completely to explain your behaviour. For people – unless one distinctly dislikes them – don't get on one's nerves very much if one only sees them for a few minutes at long intervals. – I remember, e.g., seeing you once in the Katalogue room of the university Library. You were looking at the little floor map in the middle and I approached you saying a few words to you (I don't know what about). You made me some sign by words and looks to the effect that you didn't wish to be interrupted at the moment (I take it there was something you were afraid you might forget). But the point is this: The gesture, the tone and the look you used were EXACTLY those of an irritable schoolmaster trying to tell an irritating boy not to disturb him. And it seems to me most extraordinary, because you obviously are a man of good and polite manners. – Now your behaviour this morning was of the same – to me inexplicable – *terrible* rudeness. It did *not hurt* me, but it was, of course, very disagreable. And I thought, I might as well tell you about it, all the more as I'm leaving Cambridge. Because I hope you won't misunderstand me and think that I'm *complaining* about it. What I want to say is this. If you have, for whatever reason, taken a strong dislike to me (which I would understand) then your behaviour, though certainly nasty, is quite understandible and not anything alarming. If, on the other hand, though not particularly liking me, you don't particularly dislike me either, your behaviour seems to me *most* alarming. I should like to say in this case: Please see that you don't become completely inhuman! – This letter, though it may be all wrong, is certainly *not* written in a vindictive mood; but I feel as if I had seen something *sinister*, and I want to tell you about it.

Yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

373. From the Minutes of the Moral Science Faculty Board, 13.10.1947

Professor Broad proposed a tribute to Professor Wittgenstein.

374. To G. E. Moore, [November 1947]

Sunday

Dear Moore,

This is only to say that I've found the missing M.S.S. Miss Anscombe had not just *one* copy, as I believed, and I found part of a M.S. in my own possession, and together and with the bit you have the three copies are complete. I needn't say I'm glad.

I also wish to say that I enjoyed VERY much seeing you these last 5 weeks. I think, in a way, more than I used to. I wish you lots of good luck!

Yours

L. Wittgenstein

P.S. I shall give Drury your good wishes. You didn't actually tell me to, but I know it's all right with you.

Dated by Moore.

In October 1947 Wittgenstein had resigned the Professorship. The resignation became effective from 31 December.

M.S.S. – Refers to the typescript of the first part of the *Investigations*. See **366** above.

375. To P. Sraffa, 5.11.1947

Wednesday

Dear Sraffa,

This is only to say that I shan't have to ask you to take the packages with M.S.S. etc. out of the bank. I delivered them to my sister yesterday when she passed through London on her way to America. She sends your mother and yourself her kind regards.

Yours

L. Wittgenstein

Dated in pencil by Sraffa.

M.S.S. – See **275**.

376. To G. H. von Wright, 6.11.1947

Trinity Coll. Camb.
6.11.47.

Dear v. Wright,

Thanks for your letter. I have resigned but my professorship ends on December 31st. I shall stay here for another 3 weeks, I'm dictating some of the stuff which I wrote during the last 2–3 years. It's mostly bad but I've got to have it in a handy form, i.e. typewritten, because it may possibly give rise to better thoughts when I read it. I don't know where in Ireland I shall be but the address "Trinity College" will always find me. I am in *no* way optimistic about my future but as soon as I had resigned I felt that it was the only natural thing to have done. – In dictating my stuff I am using up the paper you were so *very* nice to bequeathe to me. – "Der Schmetterling" I don't like as much as "Eduards Traum", but it's wonderful in parts. Especially the homecoming. You are quite right, I found the book by an extraordinary chance in a shop in Vienna.

I hope to hear from you often if you're not too busy. I wish you luck!

Yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

"*Der Schmetterling*" . . . "*Eduards Traum*" – *Novellen* – really moral tales – by Wilhelm Busch. For the former see letter to von Wright below (**378**). Eduard relates his dream in which his soul shrank to an extensionless point (as in *Tractatus* 5.64) and had many philosophical adventures after which he woke to the sounds of everday and to find he had a heart again, "And joking apart, my friends, only a man who has a heart can feel and truly say (i.e. from the heart) that he is good for nothing. That done, things will sort themselves out." This (or its conclusion) was a favourite quotation of Wittgenstein's: see Engelmann, *Letters from Ludwig Wittgenstein with a Memoir*, p. 116.

A similar letter (apart from the reference to Wilhelm Busch) was sent to Malcolm on 16 November 1947. That letter incidentally reveals that M. Lazerowitz (who had planned to come and hear Wittgenstein) had written to complain about his decision to resign.

377. To R. Rhees, 9.12.1947

c/o Mrs Kingston
Kilpatrick House
Red Cross
Wicklow
Eire
9.12.47.

Dear Rhees,

Today I arrived at the above address and am feeling still very strange, cold and uncomfortable. I hope I'll get acclimatized. It's a little guesthouse, the only guest is me, it's about 3 hours by bus from Dublin. I came here because in spite of looking around for 2 weeks I could find nothing else that would do at all. I may, in a couple of months, move to a much more isolated place in the west of Ireland. I can't, so far, say anything about my work – or about anything else for that matter. Wish me luck! – and the same to you!

Please give all my good wishes to Mrs Rhees.

I shan't come to England at Christmas, unless there are most unexpected developements – I havent seen a newspaper for ages. I don't think I've lost much.

Yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

378. To G. H. von Wright, 22.12.1947

c/o Mrs Kingston
Kilpatrick House
Red Cross
Wicklow
Eire
22.12.47

Dear v. Wright,

Thank you for your X-mas letter. A day or two ago I sent you a card. As you see from the above address I'm not solitary. This is a big sort of farm and they take guests in summer but not during the winter, and so I'm alone with the family. They are very quiet, I have my meals in my room and am very little disturbed. Still, I could do with greater loneliness and I intend to exchange this place for a more lonely one later in the year. Red Cross is a village but the farm is about 2 miles outside it and fairly isolated. I am working a fair amount. Not too bad – and not too good. Heaven knows if I'll ever publish this work, but I should like you to look at it after my death if you survive me. There is a good deal of hard thinking in it. I feel *a good deal* better here than in Cambridge.

What you write about not intending to apply for the professorship in Cambridge I understand perfectly, and I had assumed before you wrote to me that you'd not apply. The chief reason why I thought it was, that the prospect of becoming English, or a refugee in England, seemed to me anything but attractive in our time, and I thought that you would *certainly* not wish to bring up your children in England. I hope for your sake you won't be compelled to do so; though for Cambridge it would be lucky, unless Cambridge were to drag you down, which, however, I don't assume.

"Der Schmetterling" is, in part, marvelous e.g. the end when he comes home – "*Es war ein lustiges Schneegestöber bei nördlichem Winde . . .*".

I read hardly anything: a few detective stories and some other things I've already read many times. Real reading is always bad for me.

I have a close friend in Dublin (about $2^1/_2$–3 hours journey from here) whom I can see about once a month. Whether I'll go to Norway again I don't know at all. – Thanks for the cutting. I think I know where the Steinlavine must have gone down. I hope nothing has happened to any of the people I know!

I wish you good thoughts and good feelings and that nothing shall make you shallow. I hope somehow to see you again some day before so very long.

Ludwig Wittgenstein

P.S. On looking at your address I see that I made a mistake on the envelope of my X-mas card I wrote 77 instead of 7. I wonder if you'll get it.

"*Der Schmetterling*" – "The Butterfly", Wilhelm Busch's moral tale (see **376** above).

"*Es war ein lustiges Schneegestöber bei nördlichem Winde*" – "There was a cheerful flurry of snow and a northerly wind", i.e. as the useless apprentice limps home to reality after years in pursuit of the butterfly. This kind of return or acceptance is the theme of both of the tales mentioned in **376** above.

I have a close friend in Dublin – Obviously Drury.

Steinlavine – Rockfall.

1948

379. To R. Rhees, 5.2.1948

Kilpatrick House
Red Cross
Wicklow
5.2.48.

Dear Rhees,

I haven't yet thanked you for your letter of Jan. 9th though I often wanted to. I am in *very* good bodily health. My nerves, I'm afraid, often misbehave. Of course they're tired and old nerves. – My work, on the whole, goes fairly well. Again, it's the work of an old man: for, though I am not really *old*, I have, somehow, an *old* soul. May it be granted to me that my body doesn't *survive* my soul! – I saw Drury about a fortnight ago. He sends you all his good wishes. He is very busy indeed. While I am here, i.e. comparatively close to Dublin, we shall see each other about once a month. – The winter is very mild, I'm glad to say, and not so wet that I can't go for a walk almost every day, which does me lots of good. There is nothing like the Welsh coast line here, but the colours are most wonderful and make up for everything. – If ever you should see one of the Clements' I wish you could find out whether they got a letter from me about Christmas with a cheque for £ 2–0–0 enclosed. They sent me a Christmas card but didn't mention my present, so I'm wondering. I needn't tell you I don't want any *thanks*, but I'd like to know if they've got it.

You may wonder what this pencil line means. The answer is: it means *nothing*. I don't know how it's got there. I found it to my surprise when I turned the page. Which just shows you –.

I hope you won't have bad news from your mother and I hope we shall be able to see each other before long.

Ludwig Wittgenstein

the colours are most wonderful – Red Cross is near the site of the Meeting of the Waters, a beauty spot in Ireland.

the Clements' – A family with whom Wittgenstein often lodged in Swansea.

380. To N. Malcolm, 5.2.1948

Kilpatrick House
Red Cross
Wicklow
Eire
5.2.48.

Dear Norman,

I had your letter of Jan. 6th a good long time ago. Thanks! I am now in very good bodily health and my work isn't going bad either. I have occasional queer states of nervous instability about which I'll only say that they're rotten while they last, and teach one to pray.

I've never read "The works of love". Kierkegaard is far too deep for me, anyhow. He bewilders me without working the good effects which he would in *deeper* souls. – Years ago Drury read to Skinner and me the beginning of the "Conquest of Mexico" which we found very interesting indeed. That I didn't like the parsonish point of view of Prescott's is, of course, a different story. – I am not reading much, thank God. I read in Grimm's fairy tales and in Bismarck's "Gedanken and Erinnerungen" which I admire greatly. I don't mean, of course, that my views are Bismarck's views. It's written in very excellent, though rather difficult German, as the sentences are very long. Otherwise I'd recommend you to look at it.

I wish you *lots* of good luck, and I know you wish me the same; and *do I need it*!

All the best to Lee and Ray.

Affectionately
Ludwig

I haven't anyone at all to talk to here, and this is good and in a way bad. It would be good to see someone occasionally to whom one could say a really friendly word. I don't need *conversations*. What I'd like would be someone to smile at occasionally.

Kierkegaard – Wittgenstein read Kierkegaard during the First World War, Russell was surprised to learn (**75**). Drury records fluctuations in Wittgenstein's estimation of or ability to profit from Kierkegaard (R. Rhees (ed.), *Ludwig Wittgenstein: Personal Recollections*, pp. 102–4). But see **314** above for his recommendation of Kierkegaard to Smythies.

"*The works of love*" – Kierkegaard, *The Works of Love*, trans. D. F. and L. M. Swenson (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1946). Malcolm had expressed his enthusiasm for this work (*Ludwig Wittgenstein: A Memoir*, p. 107).

"*Conquest of Mexico*" – *History of the Conquest of Mexico* by H. M. Prescott, a classic narrative history written by a blind man, who had never been to Mexico. It is now frowned on as not politically correct.

Lee and Ray – Malcolm's wife and son.

381. To G. H. von Wright, 23.2.1948

Kilpatrick House
Redcross
Wicklow
Eire
23.2.48.

Dear von Wright,

Miss Anscombe wrote to me a few weeks ago that you had put in for the professorship. I shall write the recommendation in a few days and send it to the Registrary as you suggest. May your decision be the right one! I have *no* doubt that you will be a better professor than any of the other candidates for the chair. But Cambridge is a dangerous place. Will you become superficial? smooth? If you don't, you will have to suffer terribly. – The passage in your letter which makes me feel particularly uneasy is the one about your feeling enthusiasm at the thought of teaching in Cambridge. It seems to me: if you go to Cambridge you must go as a *sober* man. – May my fears have no foundation, and may you not be tempted beyond your powers!

If I wanted to play providence I'd write you a lukewarm recommendation; but I won't. I'll write you as good a one as you can possibly wish for. For what can I know about the future?

Good luck!

Yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

play providence – *Schicksal spielen* or usurping the role of destiny was both a temptation and a reproach in the Wittgenstein family. Thus Ludwig wrote to his sister Helene, "*Hüte Dich davor, Schicksal spielen zu wollen!*" – she was not to interpret in her own sense the wishes of their dying sister: see *Familienbriefe*, ed. B. McGuinness, M. C. Ascher, and O. Pfersmann (Vienna: Hölder-Pichler-Tempsky, 1996), p. 197.

382. To N. Malcolm, 15.3.1948

Kilpatrick House
Redcross
Wicklow
Eire
15.3.48.

Dear Norman,

Thanks for your letter which I got a few weeks ago. v. Wright wrote to me about his putting in for the professorship and asked me to write him a recommendation. I did, and it won't be the recommendation's fault if he doesn't get the job. I don't know *at all* what his chances are. I'm *slightly* doubtful because of his being another foreigner. – My work is progressing *very* slowly and painfully, but it is progressing. I wish I had more working power and didn't tire so *very* easily. But I have to take it as I find it. – Your mags are wonderful. How people can read Mind if they could read Street and Smith beats me. If philosophy has anything to do with wisdom there's certainly not a grain of that in Mind, and quite often a grain in the detective stories.

That'll be all for today because my brain feels very stuffy indeed.

Good wishes!

Affectionately
Ludwig

383. To G. H. von Wright, 17.3.1948

Kilpatrick House
Redcross
Wicklow
Eire
17.3.48.

Dear v. Wright,

Thanks for your letter of March 3rd. About 2 weeks ago I sent the recommendation to the Registrary and a copy of it to Broad, just in case something should happen to the originals. I think I can say that, if you don't get the job, it's not because my recommendation wasn't warm enough; – though I didn't say anything in it that I don't strictly believe to be the truth. – My work is progressing very slowly and very painfully. I often believe that I am on the straight road to insanity: It is difficult for me to imagine that my brain should stand the strain very long. That I dread this end I needn't say. You're not the only one who needs more courage. May our fate not be too terrible! and may we be given courage.

Yours
Ludwig Wittgenstein

384. To R. Rhees, 15.4.1948

Kilpatrick House
Redcross
Co Wicklow Eire
15.4.48

Dear Rhees,

Thanks for your letter. I often thought of you these days and, although that may sound awful, often thought thank God I wrote to you not to come to see me at Easter. For the last 6 or 8 weeks have been a bad time for me. First I suffered much terrible depressions, then I had a bad flu, and all the time I didn't know where to go from here. I am now gradually getting better and I intend leaving here next week and to go to Rosro in the West. This has *great* disadvantages (it's a 10 hours journey from Dublin) but there's nothing else I can do, so far as I can see. So, had you come, you'd have found me in a state of great tribulation. Wish me *some* strength, *some* courage, and luck! During the last month my work has hardly progressed at all, and only in the last few days I've been able to think a little (I mean, about philosophy; for my brain, though *dull*, wasn't inactive. I wish it had been!). – I wish I could see you before long and, who knows, I might come to England before you go to America: It's in no way clear that I'll be able to live in Rosro. In fact I've got grave doubts, but I've got to try. – I shall let you know my new address as soon as I get there. Post will of course be forwarded from here. – I hardly ever see a paper these days, but what I saw about 2–3 weeks ago looked pretty dangerous. I mean, as though a war might come long before I thought it might. (I had an unfounded belief that no war would come within the next 5 years.)

Forgive this queer letter!

May you be moderately lucky!

As always,
L. Wittgenstein

pretty dangerous – There was great tension between the Western powers and the Soviet Union in these months over the future of Germany, which the former wished to make a federal republic at least in their zones of occupation.

Rosro – A small cottage in a remote fjord-like inlet in Connemara, offered to Wittgenstein by Drury (Rhees (ed.), *Ludwig Wittgenstein: Personal Recollections*, p. 169; *Recollections of Wittgenstein*, p. 155).

385. To N. Malcolm, 30.4.1948

Rosro Cottage
Renvyle P.O.
Co Galway
Eire
30.4.48.

Dear Norman,

This is chiefly to give you my new address. I've had a bad time lately: soul, mind and body. I felt exceedingly depressed for many weeks, then fell ill and now I'm weak and completely dull. I haven't done any work for 5–6 weeks. I'm living alone in a cottage here on the west coast right on the sea, far from civilisation. I arrived here 2 days ago and am not yet at home at all. I'll have to learn gradually how to do my housework without loosing too much time and strength. During my illness I read "Monkey" and, to my surprise, found it agreeable to read, I hadn't expected it. – What gets me down most is that my nights are bad. If they mend, and I hope they will, I have a chance. – I haven't heard from Smythies or Miss Anscombe for a *long* time. I had a letter from von Wright a few days ago. He had lots of anxiety recently for political reasons, but things seem to be less dangerous now. – Do you ever hear from Moore? I shan't write more today, I'm much too dull. Give my best wishes to Lee and Ray and look after yourself!

Affectionately
Ludwig

"*Monkey*" – Wu C., *Monkey*, trans. from Chinese by Arthur Waley (New York: Grove Press, 1943). A Chinese folk-tale sent to Wittgenstein by Malcolm (*Ludwig Wittgenstein: A Memoir*, p. 108).

386. To R. Rhees, 1.5.1948

Rosro Cottage
Renvyle P.O.
Co Galway
Eire
1.5.48.

Dear Rhees,

The above is my new address. I arrived here 3 days ago. The cottage is in the West, right on the sea shore. The scenery is rather wild and very beautiful. I'm feeling a bit better and have done a little work, *very* little and still rather futile, as my mind is very dull, and even a little thinking exhausts it completely. I *hope* this will get better. I have a lot of house-work to do, and that, on the whole, is good for me. A man comes here every day and brings me milk and helps a little about the house. – My soul often feels *very* low, but sometimes I feel almost cheerful.

May you feel a little cheerful occasionally, too. This'll be all for today.

As always, Yours
L. Wittgenstein

387. To N. Malcolm, [after 9.5.1948]

Rosro Cottage
Renvyle P.O.
Co Galway
Eire

Dear Norman,

Thanks ever so much for your letter of May 9th. I hope that one day I shall be able to come and stay with you, and it's good to know that Lee and you will have me. Right now I must stay here and try to do moderately decent work. God alone knows if I'll succeed. I'm not a bit sanguine about it, but I still try and hope. – By the time this letter reaches you you'll probably have heard that von Wright has been elected Professor at Cambridge. – It's extraordinary that you can read the "Häsichenbraut", and not at all surprising that you find some of the dialects unintelligible. After all, if an Austrian peasant hears a North German speak he has the greatest difficulty to understand him, and if he heard a man speak in a Low German dialect (like that of "De Gaudeif un sin Meester") he wouldn't understand a single word. – May your work go satisfactorily!!

Give my very best wishes to Lee and to Raymond.

As always, affecti[o]nately
Ludwig

There's one thing I'd be very grateful to you for sending me, i.e., a tin or glass of some powdered coffee extract, like "Nescafe", or one made by a Firm Borden. Lee will know what I mean. But do it only if it's very easy for you.

"*Häsichenbraut*" . . . "*De Gaudeif un sin Meester*" – Stories from the *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* of the Grimm Brothers: Wittgenstein had given Malcom a two-volume set of these as a Christmas present (Malcolm, *Ludwig Wittgenstein: A Memoir*, p. 111).

388. To N. Malcolm, 4.6.1948

Rosro Cottage
Renvyle P.O.
Co Galway
Eire
4.6.48.

Dear Norman,

Thanks a lot for the detective mags. I had, before they arrived, been reading a detective story by Dorothy Sayers, and it was so bl . . . foul that it depressed me. Then when I opened one of your mags it was like getting out of a stuffy room into the fresh air. And, talking of detective fiction, I'd like you to make an enquiry for me when once you've got nothing better to do. A couple of years ago I read with great pleasure a detective story called "Rendezvous with fear" by a man Norbert Davis. I enjoyed it so much that I gave it not only to Smythies but also to Moore to read and both shared my high opinion of it. For, though, as you know, I've read hundreds of stories that *amused* me and that I liked reading, I think I've only read two perhaps that I'd call *good stuff*, and Davis's is one of them. Some weeks ago I found it again by a queer coincidence in a Village in Ireland, it has appeared in an edition called "Cherry Tree books", something like "Penguin". – Now I'd like you to ask at a bookshop if Norbert Davis has written other books, and what kind. (He's an American) It may sound crazy, – but when I recently re-read the story I liked it again so much that I thought I'd really like to write to the author and thank him. If this is nuts don't be surprised, for so am I. – I shouldn't be surprised if he had written quite a lot and only this one story were really good. –

My work's so-so; not too good, not *too* bad. I don't think I'd be much good at philosophical discussion now; but this may mend and then I hope I'll have talks with you! – May you be lucky in every way! Give my good wishes to L. and R.

Affectionately
Ludwig

L and R are usually called "liquida".

"Rendezvous with fear" – Detective story written with classic deadpan humour: the detective succeeds in imposing himself less by his hard-bittenness than by the large dog that always accompanies him. American title: *The Mouse in the Mountain.*

389. To R. Rhees, 23.6.1948

23.6.48.
Rosro Cottage
Renvyle P.O.
Co Galway
Eire

Dear Rhees,

This is only to say: thanks for your letter and for the cutting. Isn't Monty incredible?! If only I could get those *marvelous* war speeches where he said something like "The thing is very nice, I like it very much", refering to the operations in France, I believe. I wish you good luck for your journey!! – I plan to come to England in August and, if poss. to go to Austria in September and to return here afterwards. I'm afraid my travelling will cost *lots* of money and I might find that a stay in Swansea exceeds my budget, still I hope to see you somehow and somewhere when I'm in England. – My work isn't going well, but it could be still worse, and I'm trying to say to myself that I haven't given myself the ability or the inability and to leave it at that and quench any rising ambition.

Good luck, again!

I'm looking forward to seeing you before long.

Ludwig Wittgenstein

Monty – Field Marshal Montgomery, thought "the best British field commander since Wellington himself", applied his soldierly gift of simplification also to public statements on sundry matters. Wittgenstein's Collection of Nonsense contained several items concerning him.

390. To N. Malcolm, 5.7.1948

Rosro Cottage
Renvyle P.O.
Co Galway Eire
5.7.48.

Dear Norman,

I'm sure I have to thank both you and Lee for the marvelous parcel which arrived 3 days ago. I ought to have known that if I ask you to send anything (the Borden coffee) you'd send ten times more. It's *all* lovely and most useful, but let it be my Christmaspresent, please.

My work isn't going well though it's moving a bit. The other day I asked myself: ought I to have left the University, oughtn't I to have gone on teaching after all? I immediately felt that I couldn't possibly have continued teaching philosophy and even told myself that perhaps I ought to have resigned sooner; but then I thought of you and v. Wright in Cambridge and said to myself that I'd left exactly at the right moment. If my philosophical talent comes to an end now it's bad luck, but that's all.

I intend to stay here another 3–4 weeks and then to go to Dublin to see Drury for a few days, then to Oxford for a week or so, then I want to stay with Richards (whom you haven't met) near London and after that I want to go to Austria for [3–4 weeks] if I can get the permit. From Austria I'll return to this place, God being willing. – Do you remember Shah, the Indian who came to my classes? He came to Leenane, a village 10 miles from here, and came to see me yesterday. I was glad to see him, although our talk wasn't particularly good (I'm often tired and irritable now, I'm *sorry* to say). He is leaving for India in August or September. He'd rather stay in Europe, I believe, but perhaps it'll be good for him to get out of this civilisation for a bit. But how should I know! – Shah told me that Kreisel *may* go to Princeton next year.

Thanks again and all good wishes to you and Lee! and Raymond.

Affectionately
Ludwig

Shah – See **340** above. Shah had many conversations with Wittgenstein in one of which Wittgenstein warned him against being dismissive of the beliefs of the Jains (of whom he was one) about the afterlife, "Shah, you think you are the only intelligent person there! And all those people who said these things did not think at all? Have you thought of these things? If you have not, you should not speak lightly of them" (letter from Prof. Shah to the present editor).

391. To T. Redpath, 22.7.1948

Rosro Cottage
Renvyle P.O.
Co Galway Eire
22.7.48.

Dear Redpath,

Thank you for your letter. You were wrongly informed. I never looked for a translator for my book (which isn't finished) and I shouldn't have the means to remunerate him.

Good wishes!

Yours sincerely
L. Wittgenstein

"As it happened I heard in Cambridge that Wittgenstein, who was no longer there, was having difficulty in finding a good translator for *Philosophische Untersuchungen*, so I decided to write and offer to try to translate it. In my letter I told him I had heard that he was having difficulty in finding a good translator, that I had five months to spare before entering chambers and that I could not think of a better way of spending those months than in trying to translate his book. Remembering, however, his avowed principle that people should be properly paid for what they do, I added that I would need to ask him to give me a fair fee for doing the work" (Redpath, *Ludwig Wittgenstein: A Student's Memoir*, pp. 99f.). On p. 72 Redpath tells of how he had helped Wittgenstein in 1938 in the translation of a preface slightly different from that eventually printed in *Philosophical Investigations*.

392. To R. Rhees, [20.8.1948]

c/o Mrs Richards
40 Swakeleys Rd.
Ickenham Uxbridge
Thursday

Dear Rhees,

I got your letter a little less than a week ago in Oxford where I was staying with Smythies. I intend to stay here until Sept. 8th when I shall fly to Vienna. I am sorry not to have answered before. The chief reason is that, in a number of ways, I'm feeling queer. One cause of this is that my nights aren't good, but there are other causes. Unless something very unexpected happens I shall not come to Swansea in the near future. I should like to see you, yet dread making any arrangements at present. After I return from Austria, on Sept. 29th, I intend to stay in England for some weeks to dictate some of the stuff I wrote in Ireland. I HOPE that perhaps during that time we shall be able to meet. God knows! This is a queer letter, but no queerer than it's writer. Perhaps in a few days I shall feel a bit more rational and settled down; if so I'll write again and more rationally. Please forgive me my stupidity. As always

L. Wittgenstein

dictate some of the stuff I wrote in Ireland – The result of this dictation was TS 232: see the Preface to *Remarks on the Philosophy of Psychology*, vol. II, ed. G. H. von Wright and H. Nyman (Oxford: Blackwell, 1980), where the material is published. The manuscripts from which the dictation was taken are there said to stem from the period 19 November 1947 to 25 August 1948.

393. To N. Malcolm, 6.11.1948

Ross's Hotel
Parkgate Street
Dublin
6.11.48.

Dear Norman,

Thank you for your letter of Oct. 8th. I arrived here about 3 weeks ago after staying in Cambridge a fortnight and dictating some M.S.S. When I came here I found to my surprise that I could work again; and as I'm anxious to make hay during the very short period when the sun shines in my brain I've decided not to go to Rosro this winter but to stay here where I've got a warm and quiet room.

I'm seeing a good deal of two friends of mine, Drury and Richards, neither of whom you've met. I know that soon enough I'll have run dry again, but just now my mind feels alive. – In Cambridge I saw a good deal of Miss Anscombe and I had tea a couple of times with Rollins who didn't seem to me to have deteriorated. Which is something. I also saw Moore once. I liked being with him. I told him that you had written you hadn't heard from him, and he said he'd write to you soon. He was well when I saw him but he told me that he had not been well during the first part of the summer.

I should *like* you to have a typescript of my stuff but I don't see how I can let you have one at present. There exist only 3 copies. One I have (and I need it), Miss Anscombe has one, Moore has half, or $^3/_4$ of one and the remaining half or $^1/_4$ is somewhere among my things in Cambridge. There is noone here who could make another copy from mine, and it would cost a *lot* of money. Of course Miss Anscombe could send you her copy, but, to be quite honest, I'd rather it remained safely in England as long as there are only 3 copies existing. I hope you don't think me beastly. It's nice of you to want a copy of my stuff at all! I'll let you have one as soon as I can get another one made.

It's very kind of Lee to think of sending me some instant coffee. I'll be grateful for it, but SHE MUSTN'T SEND ANYTHING ELSE! I'm in good health and in much better spirits than I ought to be, being what I am.

Let me hope that I may see you again before very long!

Affectionately
Ludwig

P.S. I saw v. Wright in Cambridge, too, and had a few talks with him. I liked being with him. Give my best wishes to Lee and to Ray!

Rollins – Calvin Dwight Rollins, an American friend of Malcolm's who planned to attend Wittgenstein's lectures in Michaelmas Term 1947. He was later Professor of Philosophy at universities in Australia, Canada, and the United States (Malcolm, *Ludwig Wittgenstein: A Memoir*, pp. 103–4).

dictating some M.S.S. – See **392** above.

a typescript of my stuff – Not that just dictated but what turned out to be the final version of Part I of the *Philosophical Investigations*, MSS 227a and b and one lost copy: see **366** above. Note the implication that Part I ("my stuff") was thought of as complete, not as work in progress.

394. To G. E. Moore, 16.12.1948

Ross's Hotel
Parkgate Street
Dublin, Eire
16.12.48.

Dear Moore,

The enclosed card is to wish you as much happiness and as little unhappiness as possible. But I'm also writing you this note: for two reasons. I had a letter and Christmas card from Malcolm, and he says that he hasn't yet heard from you. When I read this I thought of your telling me that you'd write to him; that was in October in your room when I mentioned the fact that he had complained to me about not hearing from you. And at the same time I thought of something else you promised me then, i.e., putting it into your will that my type-scripts, now in your possession, should, after your death, go to my executors, or to me if I should then be alive. – This letter is to remind you of both matters, in case you have forgotten. You are in a position to give a great deal of pleasure (in the first case) and to avert a great deal of distress (in the second) by comparatively simple means.

Rhees is coming here for 10 days next week. I am well and working pretty hard. May you be well, too!

Forgive me this lengthy letter.

Yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

P.S. I know it's a lot to ask it – but if you could write me a line I'd be very glad. The above address is my address.

typescripts – At the death of Wittgenstein in 1951 Moore had in his possession only a typescript of the *Philosophische Bemerkungen* which Wittgenstein had given him some time in the 1930s. Moore shortly after gave it to Wittgenstein's literary executors.

395. To G. E. Moore, 31.12.1948

Ross's Hotel
Parkgate Street
Dublin
31.12.48

Dear Moore,

Thanks for your letter and for having fulfilled both promises. My executors are Rhees and Burnaby of Trinity.

I wish you all good luck!

Yours

L. Wittgenstein

Rhees leaves me tomorrow. He sends his love and respects, and so does Drury. I can still work fairly well though not as I did a month ago.

Burnaby – The Rev. John Burnaby (1891–1978), Fellow of Trinity College, Lecturer and later Regius Professor of Divinity at Cambridge.

In his final will, dated Oxford, 29 January 1951, Wittgenstein appointed Rhees alone as his executor and Anscombe, Rhees, and von Wright as his literary executors.

1949

396. To N. Malcolm, 28.1.1949

28.1.49.
Ross's Hotel
Parkgate Street
Dublin

Dear Norman,

I'm really ashamed of asking the question which I'm writing to ask you. – Some time before Christmas I ordered a cheap little book through a Dublin bookseller. The title is "The Journals of George Fox" and it had appeared in Dent's "Everyman's Library". If it wasn't out of print, Dents in London were to send it straight to you (with a X-mas card from me). I thought you mightn't have it and that it might interest you. – Towards the end of December I called again at the book shop and was told that Dents had replied they couldn't send the book to America but that a firm, Dutton in New York, supplied America with the "Everyman's Library". I was told that they had already written to Dutton about it. By a mere chance I glanced into their order book and I saw that *all* the address they had put down was "Dr Malcolm, Ithaca N.Y." – I gave them a piece of my mind and again your full address, and they promised to write to Dutton immediately. – *Did you get the book?* – I have no doubt, the card I gave the Dublin people was lost, so, even if you got the book, you couldn't have known who sent it.

I had a pretty good run of work in the last 3 months, or so, but I fell ill with some sort of infection of the intestines about 3 weeks ago and it hasn't yet cleared up. If it goes on for another week I shall consult a specialist. Of course it hasn't done my work any good. I had to interrupt it completely for a week and after that it just crawled along, as I do when I take a walk, these days.

I hope you're all well, or moderately well. It would be good to see you again before long!

Give my good wishes to Lee and Raymond.

Affectionately
Ludwig

The Journals of George Fox – This volume was indeed in the Everyman series, no. 754 (London: J. M. Dent, [1926]), distributed in America, as said, by Dutton. They were written, the author says, "That all may know the dealings of the Lord with me and the various exercises, trials and troubles through which He led me in order to prepare and fit me for the work unto which He had appointed me, and may therefore be drawn to admire and glorify His infinite wisdom and goodness."

397. To N. Malcolm, 18.2.1949

18.2.49.
Ross's Hotel
Parkgate Street
Dublin

Dear Norman,

Thanks for your letter. I'm glad you got the book. Somehow I'd been certain that they hadn't sent it to you. – But what a queer thing to write "It's terribly nice of you to think of us"! You couldn't have thought at all when you wrote that. – Now as to Moore: – I don't really understand Moore, and, therefore, what I'll say may be quite wrong. But this is what I'm inclined to say: – That Moore is in some sense extraordinarily childlike is obvious, and the remark you quoted (about vanity) is certainly an example of that childlikeness. There is also a *certain* innocence about Moore; he is, e.g., completely unvain. As to it's being to his "*credit*" to be childlike, – I can't understand that; unless it's also to a *child's* credit. For you aren't talking of the innocence a man has fought for, but of an innocence which comes from a natural absence of a temptation. – I believe that all you wanted to say was that you *liked*, or even *loved*, Moore's childlikeness. And that I can *understand*. – I think that our discrepancy here is not so much one of thoughts as of feelings. I *like* and greatly respect Moore, but that's all. He doesn't warm my heart (or very little), because what warms my heart most is human kindness, and Moore – *just like a child* – is not kind. He is kindly and he can be charming and nice to those he likes and he has great depth. – That's how it seems to me. If I'm wrong, I'm wrong. – My work is still going fairly well, though not as well as, say, 6 weeks ago. That's partly due to the fact that I've been a bit ill, and also that a number of things are really worrying me. – Money is not one of them. I am, of course, spending rather a lot, but I'll have enough for another 2 years, I think. During that time, God being willing, I'll get some work done; and that, after all, was why I resigned my professorship. I mustn't worry about money *now*, for if I did I couldn't work. (What will happen after that time I don't yet know. Maybe I won't live that long anyway.) – One of my present worries is the health of one of my sisters in Vienna. She was operated on cancer a short time ago and the operation, as far as it went, was successful, but she won't have *long* to live. For that reason I *intend* to go to Vienna sometime next spring; and that's got something to do with you, because if I go and come back to England afterwards I intend to dictate the stuff that I've been writing since last autumn, and *if* I do, I'll send you a copy. May it act as manure on your field.

Give all my good wishes to Lee and Raymond. (I wish he'd *always* remain good-natured. But I know that's a tall order.) So long!

Affectionately
Ludwig

one of my sisters – His eldest sister, Hermine, who died in February 1950.

398. To R. Rhees, 16.3.1949

16.3.49
Ross's Hotel
Parkgate Street
Dublin

Dear Rhees,

Thanks for your kind letter of March 13th. I'm afraid you were right: my illness lasted much longer than I had expected, and even now I haven't completely regained my former strength. When it was at it's hight I had the news that my eldest sister had suddenly to be operated on cancer. The operation was successful and the doctors said that she might live 2 or 3 years, but a few weeks after the operation she had a slight stroke and a worse one after that, and now she is dieing. She has no pain but she is getting weaker and weaker, and is sleeping most of the time. My two other sisters who are with her think that my coming would only upset her. I told them, of course, that if there were the slightest chance of my eldest sister wishing to see me they should send me a medical certificate and I could be in Vienna within a week. It would be no sacrifice for me to go. – My work went fairly well, and sometimes even very well, in all this time; I was too ill to work for only 4 or 5 days; but about a fortnight ago I almost suddenly became exhausted, my ideas petered out, and now I'm completely incapable of thinking about philosophy. This doesnt necessarily mean that I couldn't discuss philosophy, but I can't write. God knows if I'll ever be able to work again, but I feel that I'll *certainly* not be able to work soon. *Perhaps* a holiday of a couple of months would make me fit again. Ten days ago Richards came here for a week and we went to Ho[w]th together and spent the week there. It was very enjoyable, but the weather was mostly foul e.g. cold East wind and damp and windy. Richards left yesterday. – Nothing has changed about Drury. He is as busy as before, or busier still, and there seems *no hope* of any change. We've never been further than the Zoo together. – He has passed his exam of course and is now second in command at the hospital, next to Dr Moore. His room, however, is just as it was, only there is now a better electric fire in it. – I don't know at all what my movements in the near or far future will be. I *may* go to Vienna, or I may stay here, or I may for a time go to England and in that case I hope to see you, but I don't know anything at present. – The Malcolms invited me over to America (Ithaca N.Y.). Perhaps one day I'll go, but I'm unable just now to decide anything. – I should *very* much like to see you and have talks with you. As soon as I *know* anything I'll let you know. I can well believe that you aren't going to Birmingham for your pleasure. Of course it's conceivable that they'll do something decent there, but I confess I can't imagine it. I don't trust Mr Duncan Jones.

Well, so long! and good luck! I know you wish me the same.

As always
L. Wittgenstein

Howth – Pronounced Hoth. A rocky hill, the northern horn of Dublin Bay, not a good destination in windy weather.

going to Birmingham – No doubt to hear or deliver a paper.

Duncan Jones – A. C. Duncan Jones, Lecturer, later Professor at Birmingham University, editor of *Analysis*, and a respected but perhaps typical British "analytical" philosopher.

399. To L. and N. Malcolm, 19.3.1949

19.3.49
Ross's Hotel
Parkgate Street
Dublin

Dear Lee and Norman,

Thank you ever so much for the kind invitation. I got it almost a week ago but couldn't reply because my thoughts were in such a turmoil; and even today I may not be able to produce anything better than a jumble of incoherent sentences. First let me say a) that I feel deeply grateful for your kindness and b) that, I feel *strongly* tempted to accept your invitation. But there are huge difficulties. – My eldest sister is, to the best of my knowledge, still alive and my two younger sisters *may* still want me to go to Vienna before long. If this happened I'd probably go to Vienna within the next 3 weeks and stay there for 3 or 4 weeks. – I went to a travel agency to enquire about going to America and found out that the journey there and back would cost me somewhere between 80 and 120 pounds. Further I'm told that you alone will have to pay for my upkeep in America, as I'm not allowed to take with me more than £5. In fact I gather that you'd have to send affidavids stating that you are able and willing to pay for all my expences during my stay in the U.S.A. If these regulations did not exist I could, theoretically, spend my own money in America, but in fact *I couldn't afford that*. I could afford the trip only by staying with you for *2, or 3 months* and sponging on you! – Now the prospect of staying with you for that length of time is very pleasant as far as I'm concerned, but there is the snag that I am an elderly man and aging pretty rappidly. I mean, physically, not, as far as I can see, mentally. Now this means that you couldn't take me on any *tours*. I'm all right for strolling about but I can't do very much more than I did at Cambridge. – For the same reason I wouldn't be any good at gardening. – If it weren't for all these difficulties I'd come *like a shot*, for I'd love to stay with you, have discussions with one of you and make myself a general nuisance to the other. – I've forgotten to mention another thing. If I booked a 3rd class passage right away I couldn't get a birth before the middle of July; if I booked 2nd class, which is *much* more expensive, I could travel towards the middle, or end of May. Heaven knows where you might be in July, but even if I came earlier I'd have to stay with you until September and be a dead weight during your summer vacations. – This, as far as I can see now in my confused state of mind, is the position. –

I imagine that you didn't quite realize all these snags when you invited me. Please take *everything* that I've said in this letter seriously and at it's face-value.

Thank you again for your great kindness.

Affectionately
Ludwig

400. To N. Malcolm, 1.4.1949

1.4.49.
Ross's Hotel
Parkgate Street
Dublin

Dear Norman,

Thanks a lot for your letter of March 24th. I have booked a passage to New York on the Queen Mary for July 21st, and if my health and other circumstances permit it I will come and be a d . . . nuisance to you and Lee for 2 or 3 months. May everything go well. – I can't use your letter as an affidavid; its a *much* more formal affair than you imagine. I enclose a cutting from the regulations and a form of affidavid. I know that all this red tape is hellish but we can't change it; so please read the damn thing through carefully and comply with all the requirements. There is one more thing I want to say: In this life one doesn't know what's going to happen; and so, supposing later on you were inclined, *for whatever reason*, to change your mind about the desirability of my visit, please *don't hesitate* to tell me so. I'm told that I can have *all* my money for the ticket refunded (except 10 s, which is nothing). – I haven't been doing any work at all for the last 2–3 weeks. My mind is tired and stale, partly, I think because I'm a bit exhausted, partly because lots of things worry me terribly just now. I think I could still discuss philosophy if I had someone here to discuss it with, but alone I can't concentrate on it. I suppose it'll all change some day. The sooner the better. – Well then, please send me that affidavid and prepare yourself for the shock of seeing me. I'm looking forward to seeing you and Lee and Ray again. Give my love to Lee.

Affectionately
Ludwig

401. To N. Malcolm, 17.5.1949

17.5.49.
Ross's Hotel
Parkgate Street
Dublin

My dear Norman,

Please forgive me for not writing sooner. I received your affidavid etc. about 3 weeks ago in Vienna. I went to Vienna in the middle of April to see my eldest sister who is very ill. When I left 5 days ago she was still alive but there is no hope of her recovering. I arrived here last night. While I was in Vienna I was hardly able to write at all. I felt so rotten myself. I haven't done any work since the beginning of March and I haven't had the strength of even *trying* to do any. God knows how things will go on now. – I shall go to the American Consulate here with your affidavid etc. and I'm sure it'll be all he wants if he isn't mad. As I think I've written to you, I have a ticket for the Queen Mary, sailing July 21st. I hope all of you are well, and I hope you won't find me a terribly disagreable companion and bore when I come. All good wishes to all of you!

Affectionately
Ludwig

402. To G. H. von Wright, 24.5.1949

Ross's Hotel
Parkgate Street
Dublin
24.5.49

Dear v. Wright,

Thanks a lot for your letter. I'd love to stay with you and I hope I'll be able to. My plans are all very wobbly right now. After I had felt illish for about four months I had my blood examined a few days ago and it appears that I am very anaemic and there is likely to be some inner cause for that. I'm going to hospital today to have it investigated. So I wonder now if I shall really see you in June.

Good wishes!
Ludwig Wittgenstein

403. To G. H. von Wright, 1.6.1949

Ross's Hotel
Parkgate Street
Dublin
1.6.49.

Dear v. Wright,

Thanks a lot for your letter. The X-ray and the test-meal have shown that there is nothing wrong with my alimentary canal. The doctor sais that my anaemia is a-typical and something between an ordinary and a pernicious anaemia. He thinks that, if I respond well to the iron and liver which I'm getting, I should feel an improvement in a fortnight and that, if I then feel up to it, I might go to Cambridge. In about 2 months he thinks I might be all right again, if everything goes well. – It's very kind of you to say that you'll let me have two rooms, but one room is *ample*. There is one thing that I'm afraid of: I may not be able to discuss philosophy. Of course it's possible that things will have changed by then, but at present I'm quite incapable of even thinking of philosophical problems. My head is *completely* dull. – I hope that you will soon get some rest, once the Term is over and I'm looking forward to seeing you even if I feel that I may be a bad companion.

Please give my good wishes to Miss Anscombe and to Smythies via Anscombe. I want to write to them soon.

So long!

Yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

404. To N. Malcolm, 4.6.1949

4.6.49.
Ross's Hotel
Parkgate St[r]eet
Dublin

Dear Norman,

Thanks for your letter of May 30th. When I arrived here 3 weeks ago I went to see my doctor and he had my blood examined. They found that I had a severe anaemia of a rather unusual kind. It was suspected that I had a growth in my stomach but the X-ray definitely showed that there is no such thing inside me. I'm being given a lot of iron and liver extract and am getting better slowly. I think I shall certainly be able to sail with the Queen Mary on July 21st. There is, however, the question how far my anaemia will affect my ability to discuss. At present I am quite unable to do any philosophy and I don't think I'd be strong enough to have even a moderately decent discussion. In fact at present I'm *sure* I couldn't do it. But of course it's possible that by the end of July I may have recovered sufficiently for my brain to work again. I intend to go to Cambridge in about 2 weeks and to dictate some stuff if I feel strong enough. That will show me where I stand and I'll let you know the result. Also I shall probably have a new blood examination done by them and that'll also show something, in particular the rate at which I'm progressing. I *know* that you'd extend your hospitality to me even if I were *completely* dull and stupid, but I wouldn't want to be a mere dead weight in your house. I want to feel that I can at least give a little for so much kindness. – Anyhow, I hope that by July 21st I'll be a good deal more lively than now. (D.v.) – The American Consul here has been pretty decent so far, but it turns out that I shall have to get the visa from the London Consul because I haven't resided in Ireland long enough. I hope that part of the matter will go moderately smoothely. – I know that Miss Anscombe and Smythies have not forgotten you, but I understand that it's difficult for them to write. I hardly ever hear from them, either. – I *very much* look forward to seeing you! Give my love to Lee and Ray.

Affectionately
Ludwig

P.S. I'm getting a ticket from New York to Ithaca here, so it isn't necessary that one of you should come and fetch me, but if it could be done without difficulty I'd be very glad if you, or Lee did come to meet me at New York as I'm such a complete stranger and exceedingly clumsy these days.

(D.v.) – Deo volente (Please God!).

405. To G. H. von Wright, 8.6.1949

Ross's Hotel
Parkgate Street
Dublin
8.6.49.

Dear v. Wright,

Thanks for your card. I'm afraid I have to bother you with another question. I don't quite know yet whether I'm getting better; but if so, it's a very slow process. Now I'd like to come to Cambridge on Monday, or Tuesday the week after next (i.e. June 20th or 21st) and although I think I'll be a good deal stronger by then I may still not be able to walk about a lot, and hence, to go to restaurants for my meals *may* not be possible for me. That means that I *may* have to stay in a place where they give me all my meals. Now I don't know if that wouldn't be more than your household could do and if it wouldn't be, at least, a frightful nuisance to your family. Please write me a line about it and be *very* frank. I'm sorry that there should be all these difficulties and you know that I'm not happy about them, either, but I can't change them.

Wish me luck! and the same to you!

Yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

P.S. In case you see Kreisel, please give him my good wishes and tell him to ask Gitta Deutsch if she can do some typing for me when I come to Cambridge. She's the girl that's typed for me in the past and she is a friend of Kreisels.

Gitta Deutsch – (1924–98), daughter of the Schubert scholar Otto Deutsch and with him a refugee from Austria. She had earlier typed from Wittgenstein's dictation but on this occasion could not (see **407** below).

406. To N. Malcolm, 14.6.1949

14.6.49.
Ross's Hotel
Parkgate Street
Dublin

Dear Norman,

Thanks for your very kind letter. I never meant to *pay* for your kindness in discussions. Anyhow, the best I could give you would be lousy payment. All I meant was: I don't want to bore my kind hosts to *death*. However, let's not talk about it any more, especially as I've got good news: I've improved greatly during the last few days. So, obviously, the iron and liver extract do work. – I'm *very* glad you've kept quiet about my visit and I *hope* Black will do the same. His proposal to drive us is most kind, there is, however, one thing I've got to say. I haven't seen Black for over 16 years, but when I knew him in Cambridge, though he seemed quite pleasant, I never thought highly of him as a serious thinker, and we never were particular *friends*. I'm saying this because I don't want him to believe that I'll be a *sociable* person. If you don't think that this misunderstanding might arrise I'll be glad to accept his offer. I shan't cancel my ticket from New York to Ithaca; I'm told I can have it refunded completely if I don't use it, and one never knows. A ticket in the hand is better than two motor cars in the bush. – I didn't know how long the journey from New York to Ithaca was, and it would be *madness* for you and/or Lee to travel twice 8, or 9 hours to fetch me. So, if the car should be out of order, or off for any other reason, I'll jolly well travel to Ithaca alone. Maybe, like in the films, I'll find a beautiful girl whom I meet on the boat and who will help me. But, seriously, I'll be completely all right alone. When I wrote you the other day I was a bit funky because I wondered if my health would get better, but now I know that it is. – Just one more remark. Anything that I could be said ever to have done for you was either my duty (like lecturing), or was simply done because I enjoyed your company. Draw the conclusions yourself! – Yesterday I listened at the radio to part of a discussion between Prof. Ayer and a Jesuit about Logical Positivism. I stood 40 minutes of it.

Give my love to Lee and to Ray.

Thanks for everything!

Affectionately
Ludwig

Black – Max Black (1909–88), Professor at Cornell, who was to take part in discussions with Wittgenstein. He had studied mathematics in Cambridge 1929–31 before turning to philosophy. He published *The Nature of Mathematics* (London: Kegan Paul, 1933) and was later author of *A Companion to Wittgenstein's* Tractatus (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1964) among other works.

a discussion between Prof. Ayer and a Jesuit – Drury was present and, on his account: "Wittgenstein said nothing while the broadcast was continuing but the changing expression on his face was itself a commentary on what was being said. When it was over [Wittgenstein commented] 'Ayer has something to say, but he is incredibly shallow. Fr. Copleston contributed nothing at all to the discussion'" (Rhees (ed.), *Ludwig Wittgenstein: Personal Recollections*, p. 159).

407. To G. H. von Wright, [before 20.6.1949]

Ross's Hotel
Dublin
Tuesday

Dear v. Wright,

Thanks for your letter. I'm glad to say that I got much better in the last 3–4 days. I'm sorry Miss Deutsch can't give me more time. It means that I'll have to try to get someone else, either besides her, or instead of her. I used to dictate to a typist in Huntingdon Rd. who was pretty efficient though personally not very agreable. Trouble is – I don't remember her name, only the house in which she lived (and not even the number). So, when I get to Cambridge, I'll look her up. If you heard of anyone who can type German well it would of course be grand, but that's *most* unlikely. Don't bother about it. – I shall w[r]ite day and time of my arrival.

Looking forward to seeing you soon.

Yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

Miss Deutsch – See **405**.

I'll have to try to get someone else – For the typing of what was made Part II of the *Philosophical Investigations*. Such a typescript was used for the printing and then lost: it has been given the theoretical number TS 234. Strangely enough, no carbon copies exist or are anywhere mentioned.

408. To N. Malcolm, 8.7.1949

as from: 40 Swakeleys Rd
Ickenham
Uxbridge
8.7.49.

Dear Norman,

Thanks for your letter of June 23rd. As to whether or not we should accept Black's offer, I want *you* to decide. The only thing I'd like to say is, that *if* we accept, this should not entail that I must see a great deal of him once I'm in Ithaca. Whether there is such an entailment you'll be able to judge far better than I. If there is, I'd rather go by rail, but in that case it would be madness of you to come all the long way from Ithaca to fetch me. I already have a ticket to Ithaca (which I can get refunded in case I don't use it). Also I don't yet know what *time* the Queen Mary is supposed to arrive in New York, nor how far one can rely on the schedule. Supposing it arrived in the evening, could Black drive us back through the night, and wouldn't it be *very* disagreable for him? – I'll wire you the time of arrival in a few days. – This letter is probably frightfully stupid, but I can't write a more helpful one. My anaemia is as good as cured, but unfortunately I'm still not the same I was before I got ill. – I'm looking forward immensely to seeing you and Lee, and I hope I shan't be too much trouble.

So long! and good luck!

Affectionately
Ludwig

P.S. *Whatever* you decide will be OK by me.

Black's offer – Evidently to drive Wittgenstein up to Ithaca from New York. In the event this was not necessary for, as Malcolm relates: "I went to New York to meet Wittgenstein at the ship. When I first saw him I was suprised at his apparent physical vigour. He was striding down the ramp with a pack on his back, a heavy suitcase in one hand, cane in the other. He was in very good spirits and not at all exhausted and he would not allow me to help him with his luggage. My chief recollection of the long train ride home is that we talked about music and that he whistled for me, with striking accuracy and expressiveness, some parts of Beethoven's 7th Symphony" (Malcolm, *Ludwig Wittgenstein: A Memoir*, p. 68).

409. To P. Sraffa, [11.7.1949]

Strathaird
Lady Mgt. Rd.
Cambr.
Monday

Dear Sraffa,

Almost immediately after I had talked to you on the phone I had reason to think that perhaps you had *misunderstood* what I had said.

It was like this: v. Wright was in the room with me, when I phoned. I said to him that you had given me rather a queer answer (explaining to him the reason for my call). He said: No wonder, as you said to him you hadn't written because what had happened didn't mean anything to you. Von Wright had understood me to say to you: "I did not write because what happened didn't mean anything to me" – whereas I had said over the phone (*very clumsily*) "I did not *not* write because what happened didn't mean anything to me" meaning of course that me not writing was not to be taken to mean that what had happened didn't mean anything to me. – I write all this because I don't want to give offence by a clumsy expression which was not understood over the phone. *If*, that is, you really misunderstood what I said.

I want to add that I started writing to you in answer to your letter as soon as I got it but tore up what I'd written because I found that I couldn't say anything but commonplaces and that you knew exactly how I felt. I don't mean that someone else could not have done better, and even *I* could have done so perhaps, under different circumstances, e.g. if our languages (yours and mine) were more similar, if we had seen more of each other and if I hadn't myself been ill and depressed at the time it happened. – When I phoned today the reason was that I felt I might say something to you *now* if we arranged to meet. It didn't come off.

If this letter is quite superfluous I shall not regret having written it.

Yours

L. Wittgenstein

Dated by faint pencilling of Sraffa's. Wittgenstein was staying with von Wright at this time and the 11th is the only possible Monday. Sraffa's mother had died on 25 June, when Wittgenstein was still in Ireland, and he seems to have felt reluctance to write a letter of sympathy: the same occurred when Schlick was murdered and he sent his condolences to the family only through Waismann.

The telephone conversation is unlikely to have been really misunderstood by Sraffa but another characteristic of Wittgenstein's was to regard any small inaccuracy as a fault. He apologized, e.g., for an "untruth" when he had reported seeing someone whom he had in fact only telephoned (Letter to Mrs Stewart, November 1938). His 1937 "confessions" should be seen in the light of this habit. Letter **410** below may be a reply to a reply to this letter.

410. To P. Sraffa, 23.8.1949

1107 Hanshaw Rd.
Ithaca N.Y.
U.S.A.
23.8.49.

Dear Sraffa,

I had your letter in London a few days before leaving. I was busy and my health bad, so I couldn't reply. Not that the letter really calls for a reply, but there's one thing I'd like to say. I have *very slowly* in my life come to the conviction that some people *cannot make themselves understood to each other*, or at least only in a very narrowly circumscribed field. If this happens each is inclined to think that the other doesn't *want* to understand, and there are ENDLESS misunderstandings. This of course doesn't improve the friendliness of the intercourse. I could go into details about *us*, but I don't want to. The general situation however is often this that one man thinks that the other could understand if he only wanted to, hence he gets rude, or nasty (according to the temperament) and thinks that he is only kicking *back*, and so it starts. –

In order to understand why it's impossible, or almost impossible, for certain people to understand each other, one has to think *not* of the few occasions on which they meet, but of the differences of their *whole lives*; and there can be nothing more different than your interests and mine, and your movements of thought and mine. Only by a real tour de force it was possible for us to talk to each other years ago when we were younger. And if I may compare you to a mine in which I worked to get some precious ore, I must say that my labour was *extremely* hard; though also that what I got out of it was well worth the labour. But later, when we no longer could give each other anything (which does *not* mean that each of us had got all the other had), it was natural that only an almost complete lack of understanding should remain; and, at least on my part, for a long time a wish that an understanding should again be possible.

I believe that part of the trouble was an extreme slowness on my part to recognize and appreciate a change. I often say to myself and to others "Things have changed", but at the same time I go on acting (perhaps from weakness) as though they hadn't. That leads to lot of trouble.

This letter sounds rather professorial!

Yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

The older I grow the more I realize how terribly difficult it is for people to understand each other, and I think that what misleads one is the fact that they all look so much like each other. If some people looked like elephants and others like cats, or fish, one wouldn't *expect* them to understand each other and things would look much more like what they really are.

411. To N. Malcolm, [end November 1949]

c/o v. Wright
"Strathaird"
Lady Margaret Rd
Cambridge

Dear Norman,

Thanks for your letter! The doctors have now made their diagnosis. I have cancer of the prostate. But this sounds, in a way, much worse than it is, for there is a drug (actually some hormones) which can, as I'm told, aleviate the symptoms of the disease, so that I can live on for years. The doctor even tells me that I may be able to work again, but I can't imagine that. I was in no way shocked when I heard I had cancer, but I *was* when I heard that one could do something about it, because I had *no* wish to live on. But I couldn't have my wish. I am treated with great kindness by every one and I have an immensely kind doctor who isn't a fool either. I think of you and Lee often with gratitude. Give my good wishes to Doney and my love to Lee.

Affectionately
Ludwig

diagnosis – An examination in America had not established cancer, but Wittgenstein feared it. Malcolm recounts:

> On the day before he went to the hospital [in America] he was not only ill, but also frightened. He had told me previously that his father died of cancer and, in addition, his favourite sister was gradually dying of the same disease, despite several operations. Wittgensteins's fear was not that he would be found to have cancer (he was quite prepared for that) but that he might be kept at the hospital for surgery. His fear of surgery came near to panic. It was not the operation itself he dreaded, but to become a useless and bed-ridden invalid whose death had only been deferred for a little. (*Ludwig Wittgenstein: A Memoir*, p. 76)

Doney – Willis Doney (b. 1925) a teacher of philosophy who took part in discussions with Wittgenstein during his stay in Ithaca.

412. To R. Rhees, [2.12.1949]

Strathaird
Lady Margt. Rd
Cambr.
Friday

Dear Rhees,

Thanks for your kind letter. I am getting slowly better and the doctor tells me that after some months I may be well enough to work. (Though I can't imagine that I'll ever work again.) I am sorry that my life should be prolonged in this way. It was a great shock to me to hear of this possibility. But I dare say I'll get accustomed to the idea. Just now I'm incapable of making a plan, or thinking an intelligent thought; *that's the worst*.

I think of going to Vienna for some time as soon as possible. There I'll just do nothing and let the hormones do their work.

Thanks for everything you said!

I don't know when I'll go to London. To see you will be *very* good.

As always

Ludwig Wittgenstein

I am completely stupid and full of bad thoughts.

Envelope postmarked "5 Dec 1949" (the following Monday).

413. To N. Malcolm, 11.12.1949

Strathaird
Lady Mgt.
Rd.
Cambridge
11.12.49.

My dear Norman,

I want to ask me a great favour. It is simply that you do not *under any circumstances* let *any* one know about the nature of my illness who doesn't already know about it. The same goes double for Lee. This is of the greatest importance for me as I plan to go to Vienna for Christmas and *not* to let my family know about the real disease. – von Wright told me that Lee in her great kindness has sent a parcel off for me to Ireland. I'll get it in good time. Thanks for all your kindness (I mean the two of you.). I shall probably not be able to send you a proper X-mas present at all; perhaps a shabby and belated one. Give my love to Lee and to Dr Mooney and to Doney and Bouwsma. I am slowly getting stronger again.

Affectionately
Ludwig

Dr Mooney – Louise Mooney, the doctor whom Malcolm found for Wittgenstein in Ithaca. Wittgenstein thought her very good (Malcolm, *Ludwig Wittgenstein: A Memoir*, p. 124) and liked her as a person. However she attributed the pains in his limbs to "neuritis". He did not hold this against her (see **416** below).

Bouwsma – Oets K. Bouwsma (1898–1978), an American philosopher who had been Malcolm's professor and whom Wittgenstein met in Cornell. Both there and later in England he had frequent conversations with Wittgenstein, and his notes on these were published after his death as *Wittgenstein: Conversations, 1949–1951*, ed. J. L. Craft and R. E. Hustwit (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1986).

414. To N. Malcolm, 29.12.1949

IV. Argentinierstr. 16
29.12.49.
Wien
Austria

Dear Norman,

I flew to Vienna on Dec. 24th, which shows you that I am in fairly good health. I am no longer "despondent", if I ever was. So far I've been very, very lucky. I'm well taken care of here and the food I get is *grand*! – Please see to it that my health is not being unnecessarily discussed; it wouldn't help a bit. – I haven't yet got any Christmas present for you or Lee. It'll be an Easter present if any. – I found my eldest sister so weak that I can't imagine that she will live for many more weeks. She is being taken care of extremely well and has everything she needs. – The parcel Lee sent to Dublin has arrived there and will be forwarded to me here. I'm sure it's marvelous and much too good for me. – Give all my best wishes to Lee and Ray, and also to Doney and Prof. Bouwsma, and don't forget yourself either.

Affectionately
Ludwig

the food I get is grand – There were still shortages of food in Austria at this date.

1950

415. To R. Rhees, 3.1.1950

Tel. U 40 402
Wien, 3.1.50.
IV. Argentinierstrasse 16

Dear Rhees,

I wrote to Smythies the other day asking him to give you news from me. I caught a cold here which wasn't too good but it's much better now. – I see my eldest sister every day for a short time. It's very difficult for her to talk and for me (or anyone) to understand what she is trying to say, but sometimes it's possible. When she isn't too sleepy she loves to hear my friend Koder play the piano and she listens with *great* intensity. He sometimes plays *heavenly* and always beautifully. I wish you, too, could hear him. –

If you write to Mrs Rhees, please give her all my best wishes.

Thanks for your very great kindness in coming to Cambridge and doing all you did for me in London! – When, after that 24 hours delay, we started from the airfield my nerves were pretty much shot. I hope they'll calm down now for good. – I hope to see you before long!

As always,

Yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

416. To N. Malcolm, 16.1.1950

Tel. U 40 402
Wien, 16.1.50.
IV. Argentinierstrasse 16

Dear Norman,

Thanks for your letter of Dec. 26th. I am very well indeed now and am anything but depressed. I've had *no end* of luck. Even that Dr Mooney did not recognize my illness was *very* lucky. Give her my love, please. – My brain works very sluggishly these days but I can't say I mind. I'm reading various odds and ends, e.g. Goethes Theory of colour which, with all its absurdities, has very interesting points and stimulates me to think. – I'm *sorry* you had trouble with the parcel you sent me. It'll teach Lee though not to give me such a lot of good things! At least I hope it will. I'm overeating shamefully as it is and getting more and more fat. – I wish I could again have discussions with you, Doney, and Nelson. Give them my good wishes. If we could meet you'd find me pretty slow and stupid; I've only got very few 'lucid moments'. I'm not writing at all because my thoughts never sufficiently crystallize. Not that it matters.

Give my love and *thanks* to Lee. As always, affectionately

Ludwig

Tell Doney, his Christmas card wasn't soupy enough.

that Dr Mooney did not recognize my illness was very lucky – It meant that he was not treated, and so did not risk dying, in America. Before his examination, Malcolm recounts, he was "very afraid that the doctors might prevent him from making the return passage to England in October, which was already booked. 'I don't want to die in America. I am a European – I want to die in Europe', he murmured to me in a frenzy" (*Ludwig Wittgenstein: A Memoir*, pp. 76–7).

Goethes Theory of colour – Wittgenstein alludes to this occasionally from 1930 on, as to other aspects of Goethe. His fortuitous reading of the work (*Farbenlehre*) in Vienna at this time led him to make it the subject of quite prolonged reflections. Remarks in MS 173 dated from 24.3.1950 on are printed as Part III of *Remarks on Colour*, ed. G. E. M. Anscombe (Oxford: Blackwell, 1977), slightly oddly because they are certainly earlier than Part I. (For Part II see **418**.)

Nelson – J. O. Nelson, a postgraduate student of philosophy at Cornell, later a professor in Colorado.

his Christmas card wasn't soupy enough – For Wittgenstein's taste (or contempt for taste) in Christmas cards, see the Introduction.

417. To G. H. von Wright, 19.1.1950

IV. Argentinierstr. 16.
Wien
19.1.50.

Dear v. Wright,

Thanks for your letter and Hijab's Christmas card. I'm glad you had a good Christmas. Thank you for sending the book to Rhees. I'm sorry you had no time to read it. It's very remarkable. – Things are going very well with me. I'm much stronger and my nerves are all right. I have very good nights without using much of my sedatives. Please let Dr Bevan know about me and give him my thanks for his last (very kind) note. I am completely acclimatized and don't feel the cold as I did at first when I arrived.

I haven't been to a concert so far but I hear a fair amount of music. A friend of mine often plays the piano to me (very beautifully) and one of my sisters and he play piano duets. The other day they played two string quartets by Schumann and a sonata written for 4 hands by Mozart.

The last two weeks I read a great deal in Goethe's "Farbenlehre". It's partly boring and repelling, but in some ways also *very* instructive and philosophically interesting. You might take it out of your book case and look at what he wrote about Lord Bacon in the *historical* part.

Give my good wishes to everybody, particularly to your wife.

Yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

Bevan – Edward Bevan, doctor to Trinity College, was introduced to Wittgenstein by von Wright and became his doctor in Cambridge. He suggested the procedures that led to a correct diagnosis of Wittgenstein's illness, which was prostate cancer. Bevan and his wife later took Wittgenstein into their house and it was there that he died.

Lord Bacon – Baco von Verulam, as Goethe called him (he was of course Lord Verulam, not Lord Bacon), is praised in *Geschichte der Farbenlehre* for two things principally, his awareness of the *Vorurteile*, prejudices, or *Idola* that prevent men as individuals or as a whole from progress in thought; and for his recognition that one instance may be worth thousands if it can be seen as including all the others (like Goethe's own *Urphänomene*).

418. To R. Rhees, 22.1.1950

IV. Argentinierstr. 16
Wien
22.1.50.

Dear Rhees,

Thanks for your letter. The Busch is second hand and nasty, but I thought I was lucky to find it at all. The letters are rather difficult to understand, I imagine, because he uses quaint and odd expressions (but they are wonderful). He has the *real* philosophical urge.

I feel very well indeed. My brain is mudled and sluggish but I can't say I mind. I have been reading again parts of Goethes "Farbenlehre" which attracts and repels me. It's certainly philosophically interesting, and I've been thinking about it and even written down some *weak* remarks. – My sister is rarely more than half awake though occasionally she says astoundingly clear and deep things. – I'm sorry to hear that you feel harrassed. Take it easy! if you possibly can. – I hope to see you soon after coming back to England. *If* I'm as well then as I'm now I could even come to Swansea and we might talk a *little* philosophy, though I'm pretty stupid. Please give Mrs Rhees my *very* kind regards! If it hadn't been for her kindness I don't know where I'd be now.

So long!

As always,

Yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

the Busch – Evidently *Briefe an M. Andersen*: Rhees inherited Wittgenstein's small collection of evidently second-hand German classics. This book (perhaps this very copy) was among them when he showed them to the present editor.

even written some weak remarks – This is in slight contradiction to **416** the letter to Malcolm above: "I'm not writing at all." That remark throws some doubt on the hypothesis that Part II of *Remarks on Colour* was composed in Vienna since the remarks in it are inserted in a longer set of reflections, mostly on themes to do with certainty.

419. To G. H. von Wright, 12.2.1950

Tel. U 40 402
Wien, 12.2.50.
IV. Argentinierstrasse 16

Dear v. Wright,

My eldest sister died very peacefully yesterday evening. We had expected her end hourly for the last 3 days. It wasn't a shock.

I'm in very good health. I see Miss Anscombe 2–3 times a week, and we even had a discussion the other day which wasn't too bad. – I was very glad indeed to hear that Geache's lectures are good. Frege was just the right food for him!

Please give my love to all my friends.

Yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

I see Miss Anscombe – Miss Anscombe was in Vienna to meet Wittgenstein's family and friends and also to perfect her German for the work of translating Wittgenstein's book.

Geache – It seems to have been an initiative of von Wright's (now Professor) to engage Geach to give a set of lectures on Frege at Cambridge.

420. To N. Malcolm, 12.2.1950

Tel. U 40 402
Wien, 12.2.50.
IV. Argentinierstrasse 16

Dear Norman,

My eldest sister died yesterday. Her end was peaceful and no shock to us as we had expected it for some days. – I intend to stay here for another month. I'm in very good health. So much so that I even had a fairly good discussion with Miss Anscombe a few days ago. I'd be more use to you now than I was last summer in Ithaca. – I'm glad to hear that Lee expects a baby. I *hope* it won't be too difficult for Ray to get readjusted to the new situation; for in such a case the newcomer is apt to attract all affection and the older boy feels out in the cold, rightly or wrongly. Don't tell Ray about this remark which *may* have no application at all in his case. – I can't say that Ryle's book worries me. Perhaps it ought to, but it doesn't. I was interested, however, in what you wrote about it. It tallied with what Smythies and Miss Anscombe told me. – I should like to have discussions with you now. Still, one can't have everything.

Give my love to Lee and my good wishes to all those who don't mind getting them.

Affectionately
Ludwig

Ryle's book – G. Ryle, *The Concept of Mind* (London: Hutchinson's University Library, 1949). Bouwsma reports Wittgenstein's reaction to this book, which was that an author ought to have his own problems (i.e. that those dealt with by Ryle's book were really drawn from Wittgenstein). Ryle saw the book as "a sustained exercise in applying the general theory of meaning versus nonsense to [certain] mental terms" – he had alternatively thought of applying it to the range of notions associated with free will. Of course this choice (of mental terms) may have been influenced by Wittgenstein's work, though Ryle, when asked whether he had been influenced by Wittgenstein, preferred to reply, "I learnt a lot from him." The interest in the sense/nonsense dichotomy, though shared with Wittgenstein, came to Ryle in his early reading of Lotze, Windelband, Husserl, and of course eventually Frege and Wittgenstein. See B. McGuinness and and C. Vrijen, "First Thoughts: An Unpublished Letter from Gilbert Ryle to H. J. Paton", *British Journal for the History of Philosophy* 14: 4 (2006), 747–56, and Ryle, "The Genesis of 'Oxford' Philosophy", *Linacre Journal* 3 (1970), 109.

421. To N. Malcolm, 5.4.1950

c/o v. Wright
Strathaird
5.4.50.
Lady Margaret Rd
Cambridge

Dear Norman,

I returned from Vienna on March 23rd and came here yesterday. I found Lee's and your lovely Christmas parcel and am enjoying it's contents. – I had a letter from Oxford the other day, inviting me to give 6 lectures on philosophy. There are to be lectures of that sort every year by people outside Oxford. The lectures are called John Locke lectures and I'd get £200 for them. I was told, however, that I'd have to expect a large audience, over 200 students, and there mustn't be any discussion during the lectures. I haven't yet given them any definite answer but I think I'll reply in the negative. I don't think I can give formal lectures to a large audience that would be any good. – I feel fairly well, though not quite as good as I did in Vienna, and I'm *very* dull and stupid. In this state one shouldn't write letters but I wanted to thank Lee and you for the Christmas parcel and to wish you all a happy Easter. Give my love and good wishes to anyone who has any use for them.

Affectionately
Ludwig

I wish you and I and Doney could again have some discussions!

John Locke lectures – Funded out of the Wilde benefaction these were one of a number of innovations for which Gilbert Ryle was principally responsible: see "The Genesis of 'Oxford' Philosophy" (where he hides behind the pronoun "we"). Wittgenstein was the obvious first choice for the first series, but it was known to be unlikely that he would accept. Ryle told the present editor that to discuss the matter he invited Wittgenstein to his London club (the Travellers – the club of Phileas Fogg), thinking that the open-necked shirt and tweed jacket would not shock the travel-hardened members. Wittgenstein however went one better and came, as he explained, in the borrowed suit, and tie, of his landlady's son.

422. To N. Malcolm, 17.4.1950

As from Trinity College
Cambridge
17.4.50.

Dear Norman,

Thank you very much for your letter of April 11th. It was very kind of you to take the trouble of approaching a director of the Rockefeller Foundation on my behalf. I will try to tell you as clearly as possible what I think of the matter.

The thought of being able to live where I like, of not having to be a burden or a nuisance to others, of doing philosophy when my nature inclines me to do it is, of course, pleasant for me, as it would be for anyone else who wants to do philosophy. But I could not accept money from the Rockefeller Foundation unless the directors knew the complete truth about me. The truth is this.

a) I have not been able to do any sustained good work since the beginning of March 1949. b) Even before that date I could not work *well* for more than 6 or 7 months a year. c) As I'm getting older my thoughts become markedly less forceful and crystallize more rarely and I get tired very much more easily. d) My health is in a somewhat labile state owing to a constant slight anaemia which inclines me to catch infections. This further diminishes the chance of my doing really good work. e) Though it's impossible for me to make any definite predictions, it seems to me likely that my mind will never again work as vigorously as it did, say, 14 months ago. f) I cannot promise to publish anything during my lifetime.

I believe that as long as I live and as often as the state of my mind permits it I will think about philosophical problems and try to write about them. I also believe that much of what I wrote in the past 15 or 20 years may be of interest to people when it's published. But it is, never the less, perfectly possible that *all* that I'm *going* to produce will be flat, uninspired and uninteresting. There are many examples of people who did excellent work when they were young, and *very* dull work indeed when they got old.

I think this is all I can say about it. I believe you should show this letter to the director you approached about me. It is obviously impossible to accept a grant under false pretences, and you *may* unintentionally have presented my case in too rosy a light.

My health at present is pretty good. I'm doing some work but I get stuck over simple things and almost all I write is pretty dull. – I may go to Oxford soon and try to live in Miss Anscombe's house. I *like* to stay with the von Wrights but the two children are noisy and I need quiet. I wish I weren't so sensitive! – The address Trinity College will always find me and so, for that matter, will v. Wright's address.

I think I'd better not try to write to you anything about "motives" today, all the more as I'm not clear about it.

Give my love to Lee.

Affectionately
Ludwig

a director of the Rockefeller Foundation – Chadbourn Gilpatrick: see **432**.

423. To G. H. von Wright, 28.4.[1950]

27 St. John Street
Oxford
28.4.

Dear von Wright,

Thank you very much indeed for the Grimm. When the parcel from Deighton Bell arrived I was sure at first that it must have been sent to me by mistake as I had never ordered any books; but when I opened it I had a very pleasant surprise and I enjoy reading in the books. – The above address is where I live. I don't yet feel acclimatized at all. The house isn't very noisy but not very quiet, either. I don't know yet how I shall get on. The lodgers seem all to be rather nice, and one of them even very nice.

Thanks again! Give my good wishes to everybody.

Yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

Grimm – Geschichte der deutschen Sprache by Jacob Grimm, a Christmas present.

Deighton Bell – A Cambridge bookseller.

The above address – That of Miss Anscombe.

424. To R. Rhees, [7.5.1950]

27 St. John Street
Oxford
Sunday

Dear Rhees,

Thank you very much for your letter of April 27th. As you see I'm in Oxford. My room isn't very quiet and I'm going into another room in the same house where it's supposed to be more quiet. I'm working a bit but my work's no good, and I can't say that it is because of the noise. I'm just not in the right frame of mind; my work only mildly interests me; and you can imagine what under these circumstances the stuff is like I'm writing down. – I'm moderately well. Dr Bevan in Cambridge wrote to a London specialist about me, giving him the history of my case up to the present time and the expert replied that I might easily live for five more years. Nice prospect! Another year of this half-life would have been ample. – I think I shall stay at Oxford for the present. If I had a hope of living a fuller life elsewhere I'd move. It was very kind of you to invite me to be your guest at Langland Hotel, but, apart from everything else, I wouldn't dream of letting you pay an expensive hotel for me. You haven't much money anyway. I *hope* to come to Swansea again some day. I'd love going for walks there with you again. You'll hear from me again before long.

L. Wittgenstein

The other day I read a book "The trials of Oskar Wilde". They are *very* interesting, but *not at all* nice.

a book – Presumably H. Montgomery Hyde (ed.), *The Trials of Oscar Wilde: Regina (Wilde)* v. *Queensberry, Regina* v. *Wilde and Taylor* (London: W. Hodge, 1948).

425. To P. Sraffa, 10.7.1950

27 St John Street
Oxford
Monday

Dear Sraffa,

Thanks a lot for the "Antiphones"! I haven't yet been able to try them out as I had to go to London over the week-end. Here in Oxford the mugginess is almost unberable! I'd like to come to Cambridge in about 10 days, partly because I want to see my doctor before going to Norway. You told me which day you're leaving Cambridge, but I'm afraid I forgot. I hope you'll still be up when I arrive. – I haven't seen any papers for a long time, except headlines, but to the eyes of a layman things look pretty dangerous, as though a war might come soon.

Sorry to write so badly. My hands sometimes won't obey.

Yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

Pencilled date by Sraffa.

the "Antiphones" – Presumably pads or plugs for the ears. Wittgenstein complains about noise in **418** and **419** above and no doubt had consulted Sraffa, who suffered from sleeplessness.

426. To N. and L. Malcolm, 30.7.1950

27 St. John Street
Oxford
30.7.50.

Dear Norman,
Dear Lee,

I was glad to hear that you had a little boy, chiefly because I imagine that that's what you wanted. If all that's wrong with him is that he looks like Norman, I dare say he'll live that down. May everything go smoothly with him and you and Ray!! – The Rockefeller people didn't write to me, and I don't see that they had any reason; I never wrote to them. Nor could I ever see why they should give me a grant – though it would have been nice if they had done. – I'm pretty well, and I'm working but not particularly well. I get tired soon. The climate here, too, is *very* relaxing. (But I'm not making that responsible.) – As I wrote to you, I planned to go to Norway in August, but I can't go; I *may* go in Autumn. The man with whom I thought of going has to cram for an exam which he failed in July. So maybe I'll see Bouwsma when he arrives here in August. I have hardly any philosophical discussions. I could see students if I wanted, but I don't want to. I've got all sorts of unclear thoughts in my old head which perhaps will remain there for ever in this unsatisfactory state.

If ever I became clearer again, which is very unlikely, it would be good to have some more talks with you. – Give my good wishes to Doney, if he's still within reach.

Let me hear from you again before long.

As always,
affectionately
Ludwig

P.S. Thanks for the jacket. I'd forgotten all about it and it's mended *beautifully*!

the man with whom I thought of going – Ben Richards, then studying for his medical qualification: see following letter.

Wittgenstein wrote a similar letter to Rhees on 13 August 1950.

427. To G. H. von Wright, 6.9.1950

27 St. John Street
Oxford
6.9.50.

Dear v. Wright,

Thanks for two letters. I haven't written for such a long time because there isn't anything to write about me. My trip to Norway hasn't come off. Richards failed his exam and decided to take it again in September; so he has to cram and can't have any holidays until the beginning of October. We plan to go to Norway then. I did some work, though not good work, for quite a time, but I've hardly done anything for the last 3 weeks, and anyhow my ability for philosophical work seems to have practically vanished. – I was very sorry to hear about your accident. I hope you'll get better soon. – What you write about Spengler agrees with what I think of him. I looked at Toynbee the other day and found him *very* stupid. But perhaps he's amusing. – Give my kind regards to your wife and to her mother.

Good wishes!

Yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

Spengler – See **64** and **249** above. Von Wright discusses Wittgenstein's interest in Spengler in B. McGuinness (ed.), *Wittgenstein and his Times* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1982; Bristol: Thoemmes, 1998), pp. 115–18. He points not only to the importance for Wittgenstein of the notion of "family resemblance" but to the permeation of awareness of *Untergang* (of a great past lost) into Wittgenstein's whole view of the culture or lack of culture of his own day.

Toynbee – Arnold Toynbee's *Study of History* (probably Wittgenstein refers to the abridged version by D. C. Somervell, Oxford 1946) was a milder but still ambitious English version of Spengler.

428. To P. Sraffa, [24.10.1950]

27 St. John Street
Oxford
Tuesday

Dear Sraffa,

Thank you for the Listener. Rhine is one of those people who would make me feel sceptical about the law of gravitation if he told me about it. He isn't quite concentrated enough, however, to be *very* amusing. If you meet him, please tell him that, if he wants to get into my collection of nonsense, he'll have to compress his rubbish a little more. Still – one mustn't be ungrateful.

I wanted to see you again before leaving Cambridge, but it wasn't possible. I hope to see you again.

Yours,
Ludwig Wittgenstein

the Listener – The BBC's weekly *The Listener* published in no. 43 of 1950 (19 October) an article by J. B. Rhine on science and psychic research, entitled "Can the Mind Span Space and Time?". This letter was presumably written on the following Tuesday.

Rhine – Joseph Banks Rhine (1895–1980), Professor at Duke University, Durham, North Carolina, was the inventor of parapsychology and of the term "extrasensory perception".

my collection of nonsense – See above letters **143**, **148**, **162**, **265**, **282**. The collection included many items on spiritualism and psychic research.

429. To N. Malcolm, 1.12.1950

27 St. John Street
Oxford
1.12.50.

Dear Norman,

Thanks for your letter of Nov. 3rd. I found it when I came back from Norway about 10 days ago. I was away 5 weeks and before that I was illish for about a month. In Norway the friend who went with me fell ill with bronchitis *twice*. So there was no end of trouble and I postponed writing to my friends from one day to the other. This doesn't mean that we didn't enjoy our journey, for we *did*, and we had wonderful weather. I had intended to do some work but I didn't do any. I may possibly go back to Norway before long and try to work; it's the only place I know where I can have real quiet. Of course it's possible that I'm no longer able to do any decent research, but it's certainly worth while finding out if I am or not. Please don't talk about this plan of mine for the present. I haven't yet decided, and although several people know of it, there are others I don't want to know.

I have given Miss Anscombe, Smythies and Bouwsma your kind regards. It's always *very* pleasant to see Bouwsma. He and his wife are such kind and natural people. I am very glad that he sees Smythies regularly; I can't imagin that he sees many people in this place worth seeing. He also has had a good many discussions with Miss A. – You're quite right, a mathematician by name of Turing attended my lectures in '39 (they were *pretty* poor!) and it's probably the same man who wrote the article you mention. I havent read it but I imagine it's *no* leg-pull. Von Wright is in Finland and is coming back to Cambridge in January. I don't know if I shall see him. I saw my doctor there the other day and looked up Moore. He seemed pretty well but says he must take it very easy because of his heart.

Give my love to Lee and remember me to Doney and Dr Mooney. I should very much like to see them again though it's very unlikely that I will.

My health is not too bad but I am very dull and stupid indeed (as this letter shows).

Affectionately
Ludwig

the article you mentioned – This was A. M. Turing's "Computing Machinery and Intelligence" from *Mind* 59 (October 1950), 433–60. It proposed a test for whether a machine had successfully simulated human intelligent behaviour. See Malcolm, *Ludwig Wittgenstein: A Memoir*, p. 130. Turing attended Wittgenstein's lectures on the philosophy of mathematics in 1939 (along with Malcolm).

430. To G. H. von Wright, 7.12.1950

27 St. John Street
Oxford
7.12.50.

Dear v. Wright,

Thanks for several letters. I'm sorry I didn't write before now. In Norway there was for a time a lot of trouble: Ben Richards fell ill *twice* with asthma and bronchitis. In spite of all this we enjoyed our stay enormously. We had excellent weather the whole time and were surrounded by the greatest kindness. I decided then and there that I'd return to Norway to work there. I get no *real* quiet here. If all goes well I shall sail on Dec. 30th and go to Skjolden again. I don't think I'll be able to stay in my hut because the physical work I've got to do there is to heavy for me, but an old friend told me that she'd let me stay at her farmhouse. Of course I don't know whether I'm able any more to do decent work, but at least I'm giving myself a real chance. If I can't work there I can't work anywhere. By the way, I'd rather you didn't talk about that plan of mine *just yet*. – I had a letter from Malcolm a few days ago in which he asks me to remember him to you.

Please give Mrs v. Wright and her mother my very kind regards, and to Eva, too, if she is with you.

Good wishes!

Yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

an old friend told me that she'd let me stay at her farmhouse – Anna Rebni, a farm-owner and one-time teacher, whom Wittgenstein had known since 1914 and greatly respected.

Eva – Really Eeva Ede, a young friend staying with the von Wrights to help with the children. Later she used to visit Wittgenstein and read aloud to him (von Wright, in Klagge and Nordmann (eds), *Wittgenstein: Philosophical Occasions*, p. 474).

1951

431. To N. and L. Malcolm, 2.1.1951

27 St. John Street
Oxford
2.1.51.

Dear Norman,
Dear Lee,

Thank you very, very much for the wonderful Christmas present. I have the pull-over on right now and am looking very distinguished in it. – I don't know if I wrote to you that when I was in Norway in October I thought of going back there to do some work. I asked a friend there who has a farm could I come back and stay over the winter, or longer. I was told that I could. It would have been a *very* cheap and very quiet place. I booked a passage on a steamer Newcastle–Bergen on Dec. 30th. Shortly before Christmas I heard that my friend could not put me up after all and at the same time I fell ill and so couldn't have gone anyway. I'm very much better now and I'm waiting for some news from some other people in Norway to whom I wrote, asking them if they knew a suitable place for me. So far I haven't heard from them and I'm *not* optimistic. I spent Christmas in Cambridge in my doctors house. I'd gone to see him to have an examination before travelling to Norway and I fell ill in his house and had to stay there. Yesterday I came back here and found your lovely present and Xmas card. In Cambridge I read a book which interested me and which I thought was rather well written. It's called "Rommel" by an English Brigadier Young and is a kind of biography of the German general and a history of his exploits. I thought it might be a possible, though very belated, Christmas present and I'm sending it to you. It's possible that you won't like it at all.

All good wishes, as always, and thanks again.

Affectionately
Ludwig

Rommel – Rommel, by Desmond Young (London: Collins, 1950). A soldier's book, it is now, rightly or wrongly, sometimes criticized for undue sympathy with the German High Command and blindness to their political responsibility.

432. To N. Malcolm, 12.1.1951

27 St. John Street
Oxford
12.1.51.

Dear Norman,

Thank you for your letter and the 2 pictures. Both of them are *very* good. – Yesterday a Mr Gilpatrick from the Rockefeller Foundation visited me. I told him what I wrote to you some months ago, i.e., that in my present state of health and intellectual dullness I couldn't accept a grant; but I said that if, against all probability and hope, I should one day find that I could again do worthwhile work in philosophy, I'd write to him. And so we parted on friendly terms. – The Bouwsmas are enormously kind to me. I am ever so glad that he can have discussions with Smythies and Miss A.. Otherwise this place is a philosophical desert; and I am just good enough to eat applesauce with a philosopher. My mind's completely dead. This isn't a complaint, for I don't really suffer from it. I know that life must have an end once and that mental life can cease before the rest does. – Your pull-over is wonderful and fits me perfectly.

Give my love to Lee, and Good Luck to Ray.

Thanks for all your kindness.

Affectionately
Ludwig

From Bouwsma and Gilpatrick I heard that you gave a good paper at Toronto.

eat apple sauce with a philosopher – A reference, according to Malcolm (*Ludwig Wittgenstein: A Memoir*, p. 131), to Mrs Bouwsma's excellent home-made apple sauce. Like the guests at Pemberley (Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, vol. 3, ch. 2), even if he could not talk, he could at least eat.

433. To N. Malcolm, [after 6.2.1951]

"Storeys End"
Storeys Way
Cambridge
Today. (That's all I know)

My dear Norman,

Thanks for your letter of Feb. 6th. As you see I'm in Cambridge; I'm staying with my doctor who is an extremely kind man and an excellent doctor. I also saw a speciallist here and I'm to have deep X-ray treatment again, this time for my spine. I've had a pretty bad time at Oxford but am feeling much better now (for reasons no one knows), I have very little pain and discomfort. – Yes, the Bouwsmas were *angelic*, and so was Miss Anscombe. I'm not sure how long I shall stay here. It'll depend on how things go. – I believe I wrote to you that before I fell ill I intended to go to Norway to *try* to work there. I'd even taken a ticket to Bergen. I don't know if I'll ever get well enough to do this; probably not. In this case I shall probably go back to Oxford from here. I can't even *think* of work at present, and it doesn't matter, if only I don't live too long! I'm not depressed though. von Wright came to see me twice. If he knew I was writing to you he'd send you his very best wishes and so would Smythies and Miss Anscombe.

I wish I could have a talk again with you, Doney and Nelson. But even if I could be with you you'd find that my head was empty. (It was half empty already when I was in Ithaca.) Please give my kind regards to D. and N. and to Dr Mooney. I like to think of her and I always praise her when I talk of her. – Give my love to L. and R. and C.

As always, affectionately
Ludwig

434. To R. Rhees, 9.3.1951

76 Storeys Way
Cambridge
9.3.51.

Dear Rhees,

Thanks for your letter. I moved to Cambridge about a month ago because Dr Bevan (with whom I'm staying) advised me to get some deep x-ray treatment at Addenbrookes. I have now much less pain than I had during the really bad time at Oxford. This isn't all due to the treatment though, for the pain had already decreased before I came here, and if it hadn't I couldn't have travelled. The doctor who supervises the treatment, Prof. Mitchell, is a cancer speciallist with a lot of experience and also intelligence ("an excellent thing in doctors"). I'm up every day a bit and often the whole day. I'm very weak physically and mentally and have all sorts of discomforts but *very* little pain. – I should *very* much like to see you around April 8th. I don't know yet where I shall be then. Whether here or in Oxford. We can arrange details of place and time later. – The weather here is terrible: cold, windy and weat. I see very little of it because I'm in doors the whole time except when I go to the hospital by taxi. A fortnight ago, when I felt particularly well for a bit, I walked from Addenbrookes to Great St. Mary's. Perhaps when you come I'll have another good spell. – I read a good deal and not only detective stories.

I'm looking forward to seeing you. This letter is damn stupid, but what will you –

I hope you'll have some good weather for walks and altogether some good luck in various respects.

Yours

Ludwig Wittgenstein

Addenbrookes – The hospital at Cambridge, almost a mile from Great St Mary's.

435. To R. Rhees, [14.3.1951]

76 Storeys End
Cambridge
Wednesday

Dear Rhees,

Thanks for your letter. This is only to tell you that I've been feeling *very* much better the last few days. I went for short walks yesterday and the day before, and they had no ill consequences. I imagine that this improvement is due to the x-ray treatment. – The other day I saw in the New Statesman a review of a book which seems to be a collection of articles by various Logical Positivists: Wisdom, Ryle, Waisman, etc.. It particularly praised Waisman for a remark which comes *straight* from me. Whenever I see an obvious theft I very much dislike it; although I really ought by now to be entirely used to it. I wish some reviewer would debunk these humbugs. – The books I read recently were: "Studies in Classic American Literature" by D. H. Lawrence (Smythies lent it to me and I *liked* it, inspite of what seems to me lots of childishness and immaturity), some Hamann (which is terribly difficult for me), "Moby Dick" (which I reread because of some of Lawrence's illuminating remarks – and I got more out of it the second time), bits of the Old Testament, "Rommel" by Brigadier Young (which I definitely like) – So long –

Ludwig Wittgenstein

a remark which comes straight from me – See the note on **436**.

Hamann – J. G. Hamann (1730–88) known as the Magus of the North. A provocative writer on religion and culture utterly opposed to the Enlightenment. The second volume of his works, *Schriften über Philosophie/Philologie/Kritik, 1758–1763* (Freiburg: Herder, 1950), was sent to Wittgenstein as a Christmas present by Ludwig Hänsel. Thanking him (in a letter dated 1 February 1951) Wittgenstein calls it great and impressive notwithstanding the Greek and *difficult* Latin quotations and other barriers to understanding (by implication spiritual ones). To Drury he commented on the presumption with which Hamann said it was "just like God" to wait for the evening before confronting Adam with his fault.

"Moby Dick" – *Moby Dick: or, The White Whale*, the novel by Herman Melville (1819–91), appeared in 1851. Lawrence says many things which may have attracted Wittgenstein, sometimes criticizing Melville's preaching, but saying "when he forgets all audience, and gives us his sheer apprehension of the world, then he is wonderful, his book commands a stillness in the soul, an awe" (D. H. Lawrence, *Studies in Classic American Literature* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, [1971]), p. 154). Despite his excessive symbolism Melville manages "to keep it a real whaling ship, on a real cruise . . . He wanted to get metaphysically deep. And he got deeper than metaphysics" (p. 159).

436. To N. Malcolm, 19.3.1951

76 Storeys Way
Cambridge
19.3.51.

Dear Norman,

Thanks for your letter. I'm feeling much better now than I did a month ago. I have hardly any pain. The improvement is probably due to the deep x-ray treatment I took for a few weeks. (This time it wasn't my shoulders but my spine that got the rays). I am of course very weak and there seems no doubt that this isn't going to change for the better as time goes on. I hardly think that I'll be on this earth when you come to Cambridge in Autumn '52. Still, one doesn't know.

I am not depressed in the least, by the way. – I'm very glad you liked the Rommel book. I looked at it quite recently again and was impressed again by the thoroughly *decent* way in which it's written. Such books are few and far between. The author, where he disagrees with other people of high rank (as on pp. 160–161), expresses himself very cautiously, but one always knows what he thinks and what he would say if he could let himself go. – I can see that the question of what to do with Ray while you're in England is serious and I can't suggest anything at all. But there's still plenty of time to think about it. I'm glad that v. Wright proposed you. He told me about it a few weeks ago. – In a way it might be good to bring Ray to Europe (though not to enter him in a school) because it might open his eyes. But on the other hand it might shut them, and so I just don't know at all. – I saw Moore yesterday and we talked philosophy. But it was no good because I was far too dull and hazy. When I'm alone I am sometimes a bit brighter. – The other day I saw a laudatory review of two philosophical books in the "New Statesman". One was by a man Toulmin, who came to my classes while you were in Cambridge, I think; the other seemed to contain articles by Wisdom, Waismann, Ryle and other charlatans. The review I read particularly praised one remark of Waismann's which came straight out of my lectures. I'd like to see a review some day which debunks these people.

Give my love to Lee and all my best wishes to everybody who can make use of them.

Affectionately
Ludwig

Toulmin – Stephen Toulmin (b. 1922) had studied at Cambridge but now taught at Oxford (where he spread some knowledge of Wittgenstein's thought). Later, with Allan Janik, he wrote *Wittgenstein's Vienna* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1973), one of the first books to illuminate the role of cultural and historical context in the formation of Wittgenstein's thought.

one remark of Waismann's – In the *New Statesman and Nation* for 10 March 1951 Mary Scrutton reviewed a collection of articles *Logic and Language*, edited by A. G. N. Flew (Blackwell). Scrutton stresses the influence of Wittgenstein on the Logical Positivists (such as A. J. Ayer) and also the "Linguistic Philosophers" represented in the collection:

> Like Ayer, all these writers want to clear away much traditional lumber: to show that what looked like real arguments were only cloudbattles about verbal confusions. Like him, they mostly make it

> their business to write clear English, and distrust long words and technical terms. Like him, they derive their creed from the great Austrian philosopher Wittgenstein. "Whatever can be said at all," says Wittgenstein, "can be said clearly." If so, it is plain that Hegel and Marx, Berdyaev and Heidegger, have succeeded in saying very little.
>
> These writers do not, however, like Mr. Ayer, stress the negative, exclusive, apocalyptic side of Wittgenstein's teaching (. . . "Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent"). They lean to his kinder suggestion that every sort of statement has it own sort of logic. Where Mr. Foster tells us, "Only connect," they answer, "Only distinguish."

The collection is said to be of more than academic interest and to extend also to the "humaner branches":

> Mr. Wisdom and Dr. Waismann show imagination. They bring their reasoning home to us by examples springing from their own taste and feeling. They quote (as does Mr. Toulmin) aptly from a variety of novels; they dispel a certain impression of being concerned only with that most boring of chimeras, the Average Man. Notice for instance Dr. Waismann illustrating the influence of language on our thoughts by noticing how differently one regards colour if one's language expresses it by a verb – "the sky blues" rather than an adjective, and exploring how such a difference may alter one's ordinary mode of experience as well as one's metaphysic. Here is a man who knows how to look at things.

The example of the use of verbs of colour occurs not only in this article of Waismann's ("On Verifiability") but in his *Logik, Sprache, Philosophie*, ed. G. P. Baker, B. McGuinness, and J. Schulte (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1976); trans. into English as *Principles of Linguistic Philosophy*. It does not occur in Wittgenstein's manuscripts but may have occurred in Vienna conversations in the early 1930s. Some examples there given from Russian colour vocabulary slightly favour a later date, on Wittgenstein's side.

437. To R. Rhees, 30.3.1951

76 Storeys Way
Cambridge
30.3.51.

Dear Rhees,

Thank you ever so much for sending me the book about Japan. It arrived yesterday and I immediately began to read in it; first the beginning and then a bit in the middle. It interests me *very* much. I don't know if I always like the *way* it's written. But of course I can't tell from the little I've read so far. – I don't know if I told you that I had made the acquaintance of a book which I like and admire a lot. It's a book called "Rommel" by one Brigadier Desmond Young. It's a kind of biography of Rommel and describes his exploits in France and Africa. It is *extremely* interesting, seems to me *very* well written and with complete fairness and without a trace of meanness. I wonder what you'd think of it. – I am, on the whole, pretty well, rather weak of course, and occasionally having very mild pain. I have NO cause to grumble!

I'm looking forward to seeing you.

Thanks again. As always
Ludwig Wittgenstein

"*Rommel*" – See **431** and **435** above.

438. To N. Malcolm, 16.4.1951

76 Storeys Way
Cambridge
16.4.51.

Dear Norman,

Thanks for your letter. Apart from a certain weakness which has constant ups and downs I'm feeling *very* well these days. My room here is much more agreable than the one in Oxford. Not that anyone could *possibly* be kinder to me than Miss Anscombe was; and I was very happy there, too, while I was ill. But now that I'm up the whole day I prefer it here. Thanks for sending me the book Kon-tiki. I've often heard of it and it's bound to be interesting. – I saw Moore twice recently and had discussions with him. One very bad one, the other fairly good. I was responsible for the bad one's being bad. An extraordinary thing has happened to me. About a month ago I suddenly found myself in the right frame of mind for doing philosophy. I had been *absolutely* certain that I'd never again be able to do it. It's the first time after more than 2 years that the curtain in my brain has gone up. – Of course, so far I've only worked for about 5 weeks and it may be all over by tomorrow; but it bucks me up a lot now.

I'm indoors most of the time, all the more as the weather is pretty rotten and *very* cold, but I can go out for short strolls. – I want to go to Oxford before long to visit Smythies and Bouwsma if all goes well with me.

Miss Anscombe sends her good wishes. Give my love to everybody.

Affectionately
Ludwig

Remember me to Dr Mooney. I like to think of her.

Kon-tiki – Thor Heyderdahl, *Kon-Tiki: Across the Pacific by Raft* (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1950).

If all goes well with me – Wittgenstein died on the 29 April 1951.

439. Fellow's memorial tablet in Trinity College chapel

LVDOVICVS WITTGENSTEIN
HVIVS COLLEGII SOCIVS
In Academia Philosophiae per VIII Annos Professor
philosophandi novam viam multis monstravit
rationis ex vinculis orationis vindicandam esse
rerum naturam sic magis magisque pernosci
sensit atque exemplis docebat
verum adsequendo singulari integritate deditus
obit MCMLI aetatis suae LXIII

"Ludwig Wittgenstein, Fellow of this College, Professor of Philosophy in the University for eight years, showed to many a new way of philosophizing, and perceived and taught by examples that reasoning should be freed from the shackles of language, thus yielding an ever profounder knowledge of the nature of reality. There was a singular integrity in his devotion to the pursuit of truth. He died in 1951 in his 63rd year."

Funerary tablets of Fellows of Trinity are inserted in the panelling of the antechapel behind the statues of Newton, Bacon, and other *lumina* of the College. There is an error as to Wittgenstein's age, which I have smoothed out in translation. He had just passed his sixty-second birthday.

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